

# Township of ESQUIMALT Current

community newsletter: winter 2021

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## Celebrating parks and recreation

Construction of the Esquimalt Gorge Park pavilion continues to progress with a soft opening planned for early in the new year. The roof is now in place with 126 solar panels positioned to receive the rays of the sun.

A ceremonial tree planting with mayor and council and the Takata family happened on October 15 to commemorate the \$25,000 donation to the park. In November, the Victoria Horticultural Society celebrated their 100-year anniversary with a basalt bench donation to Esquimalt Gorge Park and tree planting.



*The rain didn't dampen the positive vibes of the October 15 cherry tree forest dedication. Several members of the Takata family as well as community members were on hand to help celebrate.*



*For 100 years, the Victoria Horticultural Society has supported gardeners and gardens in our communities. Congratulations on a history of knowledge and skill! This planting and bench unveiling was November 18.*

The Township of Esquimalt in partnership with World Fisheries Trust and the Gorge Waterway Action Society will be receiving a grant from the Pacific Salmon Foundation and the Stewardship Centre of BC to develop a "green shore" at Esquimalt Gorge Park estuary.

The Green Shore Initiative promotes healthy shore environments that provide significant environmental, economic, and social values to coastal communities. This demonstration site will help visitors of all ages learn about healthy shorelines, salmon habitat and our local ecosystem.

## 22nd annual Esquimalt community food drive

For the 22nd year in a row, township and CUPE staff are collecting food in support of Esquimalt Neighbourhood House, a multi-service social service agency that provides emergency meals for individuals and families in Esquimalt. Every year, the Esquimalt community's generosity provides much-needed provisions to help the Neighbourhood House continue to be a resource for youth, families, seniors and adults.

Non-perishable foods can be dropped off at any Township of Esquimalt facility until December 21 during business hours. This includes the municipal hall, the sports centre, the recreation centre and the public works yard.

For residents, place non-perishable food items in bags labelled "Food Drive" and place alongside your garbage bins for pick up (south side: Dec 6-10; north side: Dec 13-17).

Details at [Esquimalt.ca](http://Esquimalt.ca)



# Holiday safety

As we approach the holiday season, it is important to keep in mind the following Christmas tree safety tips:

- When picking a fresh tree choose a tree with fresh green needles that do not fall off when touched.
- Cut 2" off of the base of fresh trees before placing in tree stand.
- Keep the tree at least 3 feet away from any heat source—like fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand daily, or more often if needed.
- Use lights that are listed for use for indoors.
- Replace worn or damaged light strings.
- If you are connecting light strings together make sure you do not overload the light string (see manufacturer's instructions).
- Do not decorate a tree with lit candles.
- Turn off your Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.

After Christmas remove your Christmas tree before it dries out. Watch for community recycling programs and chip-ups to get rid of your tree.

Dry trees are a very real fire danger. Do not leave them lying against your home or garage.



Sparky the Fire Dog practices safety when it comes to holiday decorating.

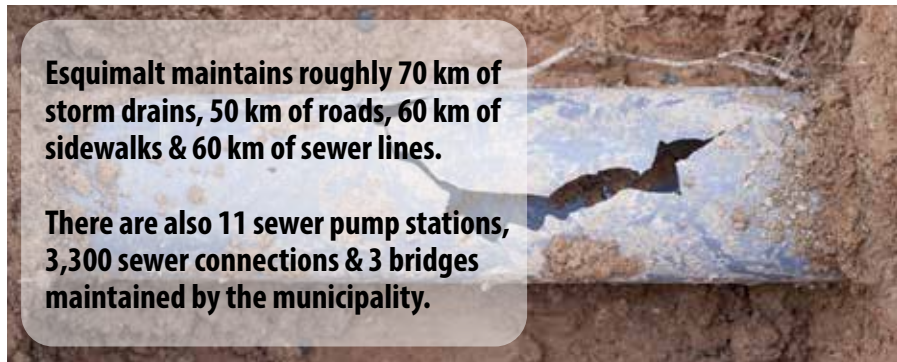
# Inflow & infiltration—what is it?

Inflow and infiltration (I & I) adds to the amount of water that goes into our municipal sewer system. This unintended water can have costly impacts for homeowners and the township.

How does that happen? Inflow is rainwater that enters the sewer through cross connections (i.e., catch basins, roof drains). Infiltration is waste that enters the sewer through cracks, leaky joints or some other failure in the structural integrity of the pipe.

The reason I & I needs to be controlled is that these additional flows add water volume to the sewer—water that doesn't need to be treated. This translates into additional costs to the township for wastewater treatment.

During storm events these additional flows also contribute significantly to sanitary overflows or backups into private property. Township staff are working on a plan to reduce I & I on both municipal and private properties.



**Esquimalt maintains roughly 70 km of storm drains, 50 km of roads, 60 km of sidewalks & 60 km of sewer lines.**

**There are also 11 sewer pump stations, 3,300 sewer connections & 3 bridges maintained by the municipality.**

## Welcome new staff!

The Township of Esquimalt welcomes **Steve Serbic** as its new Fire Chief. Serbic has over 24 years of firefighting experience, and several years of leadership experience in the fire service, most recently at Surrey Fire. Prior to that, he worked as an Assistant Chief here at the township for 3.5 years.

**Tanner Northrup** joins the township as the Manager of Public Works. Tanner was previously with the City of Vancouver but was happy to be back on the island he grew up on.

**Sue-Anne Carter** is the new executive assistant for the mayor and chief administrative officer. She comes from a strong local government background including the CRD and the District of Saanich.

Development Services welcomes **Yvonne Mitchell** to the team as a planner. Yvonne is a recent graduate of the Masters of Urban and Regional Planning program at Queens University. Prior to joining us, she worked for the City of Ottawa. Yvonne is originally from Nanaimo and happy to return to the Island.

## VicPD Esquimalt Division: holiday updates

As the holiday season approaches, police officers in the Esquimalt Division will be focusing on two key initiatives: high-visibility patrols and traffic safety. From a patrol perspective, citizens of the Township can expect to see their officers across the community on foot, riding mountain bikes, or in their vehicles.

Their focus will be to pro-actively prevent social disorder issues and to provide exceptional responsiveness to calls for service. Traffic safety is also of the utmost importance this time of year so the Township will see an increased presence of speed-reader devices and counter-attack roadblocks to reduce unsafe and impaired driving in the community.

## Volunteer opportunities

Learn new skills! Get prepared. Meet your neighbours. Your community needs you!

The Esquimalt Emergency Program is looking for volunteers for the following teams:



- Emergency Support Services (evacuee assistance)—receive training as an emergency responder and assist residents displaced by house fires, apartment fires, police armed stand-offs, and other larger disasters.
- Emergency Radio Communications—Learn about radio communications, get your amateur radio license, and provide vital communications back-up during emergencies.
- Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness Program—learn how to put an emergency kit together and local hazards impacting your community.

No experience necessary and training is free.

For more information, contact the emergency program office at 250-414-7120.

## 2022 budget & public input

### Public input opportunities & important dates

January 24: Council meeting—budget challenges presentation to discuss understanding of council priorities and acceptable tax revenue increase

February 7: Council meeting—core budget presentations by department heads to provide departmental objectives and achievements to council; early budget approvals

March 15: Special council meeting—consideration of 2022–2026 requests to approve supplemental operating and capital requests subject to funding and tax increase envelope

April 4: Council meeting—tax rate policy discussion; Director of Financial Services presents options for council to reach consensus on property tax rate policy/tax rates

All meeting information will be posted on our Legistar site with council agenda information.

## Hearing from you: upcoming surveys

### Policing services survey

The 2014 Police Framework Agreement is set up for renewal in 2024. The agreement is intended to clarify many aspects of service delivery and governance including sharing of costs of the amalgamated police force, dedicated resources for Esquimalt and City of Victoria, budget approval processes, dispute resolution and performance metrics. The Township needs to decide whether or not to renew the agreement for another ten years within the dates of July 1 and December 31 2022.



VicPD at the 2019 Neighbourhood Party.

**Part of that decision-making process is reaching out to the Esquimalt community to see how residents and businesses feel about policing in Esquimalt and the terms of the current agreement.**

This community and stakeholder engagement will assist the Township in determining the level of satisfaction with the current amalgamated service delivery model in the context of funding and services relative to comparable municipalities. The project is in the very early stages and details will be posted on [Esquimalt.ca](http://Esquimalt.ca) as they emerge.

### Fire services survey

The Esquimalt Fire Department is developing a dynamic strategic plan to guide the fire department over the next five years. This plan will guide the delivery of valued, cost-effective and efficient protective services to the citizens and businesses of the Township of Esquimalt, community partners and other stakeholders.



A Platoon after a live-fire training session.

**The department wants to include the community it serves in developing the strategic plan for 2022–2027 by way of a short survey.** This input will provide meaningful insight into community needs, expectations and feedback regarding the services we provide. The results from this survey will be used to draft the strategic plan. The plan—with goals, timelines and measures of success—will be posted on our website when completed in early 2022. Find the survey at [esquimalt.ca/fire](http://esquimalt.ca/fire).

**The township conducts its business on the traditional territory of the Lekwungen-speaking peoples and works to be increasingly mindful of its commitment to more inclusive governance with our neighbours.**

**We are committed to building stronger working relationships with both Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations.**

## Township contacts

Emergency 9-1-1

### Esquimalt Municipal Hall

1229 Esquimalt Road  
Esquimalt, BC V9A 3P1

Municipal hall reception	250-414-7100
Building Inspections	250-414-7103
Bylaw Enforcement	250-414-7161
Corporate Services	250-414-7136
Development Services	250-414-7103
Engineering/Public Works	250-414-7108
Finance	250-414-7100
Parks and Recreation	250-412-8500

### Esquimalt Municipal Archives

1149-A Esquimalt Rd (limited hours; call,  
go online or archives@esquimalt.ca)  
1229 Esquimalt Road (mail)  
Esquimalt, BC V9A 3P1 250-412-8540

### Esquimalt Recreation Centre

527 Fraser Street  
Esquimalt, BC V9A 6H6 250-412-8500

### Archie Browning Sports Centre

1151 Esquimalt Road  
Esquimalt, BC V9A 3N6 250-412-8510

### Public library—Esquimalt branch

1231 Esquimalt Road 250-414-7198

### Public Safety Building

2nd Floor, 500 Park Place  
Esquimalt, BC V9A 6Z9

Police Department 250-995-7500  
Fire Department 250-414-7126

The Esquimalt Current is a tri-annual newsletter published by the Township of Esquimalt and distributed to 8,000 homes and local businesses.

If you have an event you would like to include in The Current, please call 250-414-7122 or email communications@esquimalt.ca.

Sign up for email notification at esquimalt.ca to receive this newsletter by email and for updates on Township news, events and more.

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## Council meeting schedule

### Council meetings

Dec 6, 20; Jan 10, 24; Feb 7, 28;  
Mar 7, 21

### Committee of the Whole meetings

Dec 13; Jan 17; Feb 14; Mar 14

*Unless otherwise noted, council meetings take place at 7 p.m. and Committee of the Whole at 6 p.m. in the Municipal Council Chambers at 1229 Esquimalt Road. Please check the website or call 250-414-7157 to confirm meeting times.*

### Esquimalt Municipal Hall closed:

Dec 27 & 28, Jan 3, Feb 21

### In-person attendance

We are continuing to offer residents the option to join council meetings virtually as well as limited in-person.

Any changes to in-person attendance due to COVID-19 will occur in conjunction with public health recommendations and we'll continue to share updates on our website.

### Know what's coming

You can subscribe to receive our council meeting agendas via email so that you are kept in the loop about upcoming council decisions as well as are able to review past resolutions.

[Esquimalt.ca/subscribe](https://esquimalt.ca/subscribe)

## Upcoming events

Esquimalt's **Celebration of Lights** is a magical event for the whole family. Lights, music, food, Santa and it is FREE to the whole community. **The parade is on December 5 at 5 p.m.** at Esquimalt and Canteen Road. After the parade, there will be hot dogs by donation to the Esquimalt Lions & live music.

**More at [esquimaltlights.ca](https://esquimaltlights.ca)**

Featuring 50 different artisans from Esquimalt and neighbouring cities, the **Esquimalt Community Arts Hub will be creating a winter wonderland** inside their arts centre for the first three weeks of December. From December 1–21, shop in a COVID-safe environment and find holiday gifts, handmade products and unique artisanal finds. **More at [ecah.ca](https://ecah.ca)**

Experience the magic of the holidays at our **Eighth Annual Christmas Tree Village**. Join us as we transform the Esquimalt Recreation Centre atrium and the Archie Browning Sports Centre into holiday heavens teeming with twinkling lights and decorations for all tastes. **Dec 1-Jan 3.**

**On December 19, Santa is popping into the Esquimalt Recreation Centre** for some photo ops again this year. Please bring your own camera or smartphone, and one of Santa's helpers will be there to take the photo for you. Registration is not required, but donations for the Rainbow Kitchen are strongly encouraged.

**Info at [Esquimalt.ca/events](https://esquimalt.ca/events)**

### Coming soon: MyEsquimalt online services

Staff are in the final steps of rolling out online services for payments. In the coming weeks, you will be able to:

- Review & renew dog or business licenses online and sign up for ebilling
- Review property tax accounts and sign up for ebilling for 2022
- Apply for a dog or business license

We anticipate a launch in mid-December.

Watch for updates at [esquimalt.ca/MyEsquimalt](https://esquimalt.ca/MyEsquimalt)



Township of  
**ESQUIMALT**