



Comox News

July 2009

The Town of Comox Community Newsletter

Town's water sprinkling

The Town has received a couple of complaints regarding our use of water, particularly under the Stage 2 Water Restrictions that we are currently in. Some of our watering practices may seem unfair, and therefore detailed explanation is warranted.

In general, the Town follows water conservation practices, including the restrictions that are imposed by the Regional District. For example, many of the boulevards and most parks are not watered at all. You may notice some boulevards and parks do go brown during extended hot and dry spells.

However, some residents have noticed water sprinkling occurring at a couple of parks. There is a straight-forward reason for this, as follows:

The decision to install high quality, year-round playing fields in the Comox Valley was made many years ago. As a result, the Town of Comox installed sand-based playing fields at both Aspen Park and Highland Fields 1 and 2. These types of fields fail very quickly when they do not receive a consistent and sufficient amount of water, resulting in a quick and permanent die-off of the turf, and significant damage to the underlying sand bed. This, in turn, would not only result in a significant capital cost to rebuild the playing fields in the fall, but would



also render the fields unusable during the summer months.

All three sand-based fields are regulated by a computerized irrigation system that is preprogrammed for a daily amount of water, and automatically distributes that amount taking into consideration weather conditions and current rainfall. What seems to be an endless and excessive amount of watering is the result of the fields being divided into separate zones, due to there not being enough water pressure to cover the entire field at one time.

Watering amounts are preset in each zone to distribute a sufficient amount of water (usually resulting in one-half hour of daily watering each). This results in what seems to be an excessive total watering time.

The system will adjust according to current weather

conditions, including rainfall. However, the system will not automatically shut off as soon as it starts raining, but will shut off sooner (or not come on at all) if significant rainfall is registered with the system.

Another factor coming into play is the timing of the watering. Sprinkler heads are subject to vandalism when they are operational and, as a result, staff have determined the best time to start watering is at 2:30 a.m. This will result in the systems generally shutting off at approximately 7:00 a.m. However, if the system determines that more water is needed on any particular day, even as little as 15 minutes for each zone will result in over two hours of additional sprinkling needed. This is why you may have seen the system operational later in the morning on some days during particularly hot and dry periods.

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Eagles in the City



The Town is the lucky recipient of a beautiful eagle sculpture, located at the Comox Town Circle. This sculpture is part of a project called "Eagles in the City", which is a BC Lion's Society project to raise much needed funds for their Easter Seal Services. The Easter Seal Services provide specialized programs and services to help children with disabilities develop to their full potential.

Artists throughout BC have created their own unique designs for the eagles, which are prominently displayed in participating locations. Local artist Kelly Everill created the beautiful designs

No smoke and no fires!

Comox Fire Chief Gord Schreiner would like to remind residents of the Town of Comox that open burning is prohibited within the Town of Comox municipal boundary **throughout the year.**

Open burning includes backyard fires, beach fires, campfires, fires used for the purpose of land clearing, and the use of outdoor wood-burning fireplaces, firepits, chiminias, and other similar wood-burning appliances. It does not include charcoal, propane or natural gas fires contained within barbecues, hibachis or stoves for the purpose of

cooking food, nor does it include wood-burning appliances designed specifically for the purpose of smoking foods.

Over the past few years, the Town of Comox has taken a more restrictive approach when it comes to dealing with public nuisance of outdoor burning. In past years, outdoor burning was allowed for a couple of weeks per year. Now outdoor burning is prohibited throughout the year as the Town has added weekly curbside pickup of leaves and branches to its collection program.

on the surface of the Comox eagle.

For more information on the Eagles in the City Program, see www.eaglesinthecity.com

For more information on Kelly Everill, see www.kellysart.ca.

Canex recycling

The recycling depot formerly located in the Canex parking lot at CFB Comox has been temporarily located to the parking lot immediately south of the Military Family Resource Centre (Fitness and Community Centre) while construction is ongoing. To access the bins, use Snowberry Avenue.

Beverage recycling containers

The Town has purchased three beverage recycling bins for the downtown area. The Vancouver Island made bins are secure and leak-proof. One has been located beside the bus stop on Comox Avenue in front of the mall. Another is planned to be located on Comox Avenue as well, with the third in Marina Park.

The Town purchased the beverage recycling bins as a way to increase our diversion of garbage going to the landfill as well as reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Please ensure that you only place returnable beverage containers into the bins, as they will be given to local community groups for returnable deposits.



Lancaster Park/McDonald Rd Greenway

The Town has received a grant of \$30,000 from the Provincial Trees for Tomorrow Program. As part of their strategy to reduce greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, the Provincial Government is providing grant funding to communities that wish to plant trees in public places throughout their communities.

The Lancaster Park McDonald Road Greenway Project in the Town will result in approximately 400 trees and shrubs (mostly native) to be planted throughout Lancaster Park and along the McDonald Road Greenway. Many of the trees will be in the form of mass plantings, or larger blocks.

Planting is expected to take place this fall when the weather is more suitable. There will be opportunities for both schools and residents/community organizations to get involved. Please contact the Parks Superintendent, Mr. Al Fraser, at 250 339-2421 if you are interested.

Barbeque safety

Every year, fire departments attend to fires and injuries resulting from accidents that occur from people cooking outdoors on barbecues. Fire Chief Gord Schreiner has these tips to help prevent fires and injuries from occurring:

- Do not operate a barbecue near anything that is combustible. This includes the siding on your home. The radiant heat from the barbecue can ignite your home or other nearby combustibles.
- Check all gas hoses and fittings for leaks. Spraying a strong soapy solution over all hoses and fittings can do this. Leaks will create bubbles. If there is a leak, close the cylinder and repair/replace the faulty hose or fitting.
- Always use your barbecue in a well-ventilated area. Never operate it indoors or in a closed-in area.
- Keep a fire extinguisher handy when barbecuing.
- Never leave a hot barbecue unattended.
- When lighting a gas barbecue always open the lid and have a match or lighter lit before turning on the gas.
- Don't move the barbecue while it is hot.
- Keep children and pets away from hot barbecues. Serious burns can result from contact with the many hot surfaces even well after the barbecue has been shut off.
- Use long-handled utensils to avoid burns to hands and arms. Do not wear baggy clothing while cooking.
- When finished turn off the barbecue controls and the gas supply.
- Ensure your barbecue has cooled off before covering it or storing it away.

For more information on fire safety contact the Comox Fire Department at 250 339-2432.

Use of pedestrian beacons



We currently have two sets of solar-powered pedestrian beacons in the Town, with more to be installed in the future. The current beacons are located at the Guthrie Road crosswalk and the new Comox Avenue crosswalk at Berwick Centre.

The Town has received a few questions regarding the operation of the beacons, with the most frequent being, why don't they have a signal showing the person wishing to cross the road when it is safe to do so?

It is important to note that these beacons do not stop

traffic in the same manner that traffic lights do, and therefore a "walk" signal cannot be implemented. As soon as the user activates the beacons (i.e., pushes the button), the lights begin to flash. The purpose is to bring to the attention of drivers that someone wishes to cross the road.

However, it is still the responsibility of the person wishing to cross the road to ensure that all drivers have seen them and stopped before crossing.

Please use care, and cross the road safely.

Guthrie Road bike lane extension

The Town has received a Local Motion Grant in the amount of \$49,375 to extend the bike lane along the south side of Guthrie Road.

The project will consist of widening the road between the crosswalk and Pritchard

Road to create space for the bike lane. The existing ditch will need to be relocated closer to the backs of properties along this stretch.

This project will begin in August, with completion anticipated before September.

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.comox.ca

Completed road projects

The Town has recently completed a number of road works projects, as follows:

- A sidewalk has been installed along the west side of Stewart Street between Balmoral and Comox Avenues.
- A crosswalk has been installed across Comox Avenue at the Berwick Residence, along with a set of pedestrian beacons.
- Beaufort Avenue between Ellis and Church Streets has been completely reconstructed, with new sanitary sewer and storm lines, and sidewalk along the south side. New sewer and storm lines were also installed along Ellis between Comox and Beaufort Avenues, and the Beaufort/Ellis intersection was reconfigured.
- Knight Road between the new roundabout and the eastern boundary of the

Comox Valley Airport was reconstructed, with new sanitary sewer lines.

- Sanitary sewer lines were upgraded along Anderton Road between Noel and Bolt Avenues. Sidewalk was also installed along the west side of Anderton Road.
- Storm lines along Nimpkish Street from Hillside to Noel Avenues were upgraded. Also, a pavement overlay along Nimpkish Street between Chilcotin Crescent and Noel Avenue was added.

Recreation Centre

Planning work is under way for the second phase in the expansion of the recreation centre (the replacement of the old Centennial Building).

The Town has applied for a \$950,000 infrastructure grant from the Recreational Infrastructure Canada Fund (RIInC Fund).

Council is committed to building this second phase to the highest green building standard feasible, as recommended by the Town's recently initiated Green Team.

Did you know ...

... that Mayor Paul Ives has regular office hours at Town Hall?

Office hours are as follows:

*Mondays and Wednesdays:
3:00 – 4:30 p.m.*

*Tuesdays and Thursdays:
8:30 – 10:00 a.m.*

Please feel free to drop by during these times if you would like to discuss any matter. Appointments not necessary.

Notices

Beaufort Ave Improvements

Construction is anticipated to begin on Beaufort Avenue between Ellis and Rodello Streets in August. Your cooperation and patience during the installation of sidewalk along the south side of the road will be appreciated.

Stage 2 Watering Restriction

Please be advised that Stage 2 Watering Restrictions are now in effect.

People living at an even numbered address can use a sprinkler to water lawns on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 4:00 to 7:00 a.m. and from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. People living at an odd numbered address can do likewise on Wednesdays and Sundays.

During the Stage 2 restriction, no washing of sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, vehicles, or exterior windows and building surfaces is permitted.

For more information, see our website.

This newsletter is a result of Council's initiative to increase communication with residents. If you have any comments or suggestions, or would like to see anything in particular in upcoming editions, please contact us.