

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF OKANAGAN-SIMILKAMEEN

Information Release

March 10, 2020

EOC Update: ESS Reception Centre Exercise

The Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen Emergency Operations Centre (RDOS EOC) hosted the first in a series of Emergency Support Services (ESS) Reception Centre training exercises on March 5, 2020. ESS volunteers from Penticton and Summerland took part in the regional exercise along with Animal Lifeline Emergency Response (ALERT), Canadian Red Cross, and Penticton Search and Rescue (Pensar).

Similar exercises are planned for March 10th in Osoyoos and March 17th at Upper Similkameen Indian Band. The goal of these regional exercises is to reinforce best practices in a collaborative manner. This provides consistency across the region for evacuees relying on ESS programs and reception centres. The ESS Reception Centre training exercises build upon other regional training initiatives across the RDOS.

The RDOS EOC recently collaborated with Search and Rescue volunteers and other agencies to host a community evacuation exercise. “Working on joint exercises across the region simulates how agencies work together during a real emergency,” says RDOS Emergency Program Coordinator Anne Benn. “The RDOS has been able to identify areas where we need to streamline processes to provide continuity of care for individuals during an emergency.” The community evacuation exercises help build capacity and redundancy by training together before an emergency happens.

This collaborative process of learning and training regionally was evident during the recent evacuation exercise. Search and Rescue volunteers tested the new Collector App that uses ESRI’s ArcGIS platform. The Collector App was created by RDOS GIS Analyst Ryan Periana. The system allows first responders and Search and Rescue volunteers to submit data and images directly to the RDOS EOC dashboard display, directly from the field.

“I have been on many evacuation exercises in my 16 years with Search and Rescue,” says Colleen Aven, BCSARA volunteer. “I now have a better idea of what occurs at an ESS Reception Centre and how to better answer questions from evacuees.”

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For further information, please contact the RDOS EOC: 250-490-4225

RDOS EOC – Emergency Preparedness and Recovery Information

<https://emergency.rdos.bc.ca/>





Volunteers taking part in an ESS Training Exercise in Penticton – March 5, 2020

Please click the link to download the photo: <https://file.rdos.bc.ca/index.php/s/Ntei8hblfOXeQA5>