



AUDITOR GENERAL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

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FVRD emergency management audit report released

SURREY-A performance audit of the Fraser Valley Regional District's emergency management plans and programs found that the regional district had some foundational elements of an emergency management program, but many aspects of it were not developed or only partially developed, said Gordon Ruth, auditor general for local government (AGLG).

“I was pleased to see the Fraser Valley Regional District beginning to make some changes to its emergency management program in anticipation of our audit,” Ruth said, “and I hope our report will assist the regional district to continue strengthening its emergency management program.”

The audit found that the regional district only partially met the expectations included in the AGLG audit objectives and needs to take steps to significantly strengthen its emergency management and business continuity practices to be better prepared for potential emergencies. The district noted that it has already taken steps to address the recommendations in the report.

The audit report identifies specific areas where the regional district should take action, including ensuring that its emergency management program is fully compliant with the Local Government Act and provincial emergency management regulations. The report also recommends that the regional district develop a strategic and cohesive approach to emergency management and business continuity that is supported by revised or new bylaws and comprehensive plans.

Emergency management is a shared responsibility of all levels of government and its

importance has been demonstrated in recent years, as various B.C. communities have dealt with the impacts of flooding and wildfires, as well as increasing concern for coastal communities about tsunami preparedness. Provincial legislation provides local governments with direction on emergency management and is currently being updated by government.

“Given the increasing importance of emergency management and business continuity planning at the community level, I hope all B.C. local governments will review this report and use it to help focus their own efforts to enhance their emergency management practices,” Ruth said.

“Emergency management is particularly essential for local governments, given the fundamental nature of many of their services that may be affected by emergencies, such as drinking water, wastewater, roads, protective services and others.”

The report’s 15 recommendations to the Fraser Valley Regional District cover areas ranging from statutory requirements and governance to emergency planning, resourcing, training, exercising and testing emergency plans, raising public awareness and continuously improving its emergency management program.

This is the AGLG’s fourth report on emergency management in local governments. Reports have previously been released on the emergency management activities of the Capital Regional District, Town of Sidney and District of Mission.

The Fraser Valley Regional District’s performance audit report is available on the AGLG’s website: www.aglg.ca.

Contact:

Gordon Ruth

Auditor General for Local Government

Gordon.Ruth@aglg.ca

604 930-7100

www.aglg.ca