



“What We Heard”

2022 SRD Winter Storm - Resident Feedback Summary



Introduction

The Strathcona Regional District (SRD) in conjunction with the Village of Tahsis, Village of Zeballos, Ehattesaht/Chinehkint First Nation, Nuchatlaht First Nation and Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Che:k:tles7et'h' First Nations asked community members of the areas affected by the recent prolonged power outage to provide their observations on emergency response activities.

Goals

- Identify future areas for public education initiatives.
- Assess the preparedness of household and grassroots neighbourhood emergency plans prior to emergency events.
- Recruit new leaders and members for local emergency response programs.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in the local emergency plan.
- Help the SRD advocate to other levels of government beyond its jurisdiction (BC Hydro, Emergency Management BC, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development).

Why Was This Important?

It is crucial to understand that the ability of communities to implement recommendations is determined by a multitude of factors such as budget, personnel, capacity, and availability of volunteers. With some items, such as the condition of the Forest Service Road, the role of many communities is limited to that of advocacy, but organized information will allow the SRD to communicate the communities' insights more appropriately.

Communities Represented:

- Tahsis = 44
- Zeballos = 16
- Hupsitas, Oclucje, Ehatis and Pelly = 5 (tallied together for anonymity)

Household Preparedness – Most Useful Items in Emergency Kit

Description	# Times Listed
Lighting (i.e., LED lights, lanterns, headlamps, battery lamps, lamp oil, candles, lighters and matches)	79
Fuel/Gas/Diesel (Including propane, kerosene, butane cartridges, methyl hydrate and isopropyl)	44
Food (i.e., freeze-dried, canned, milk, fresh vegetables and fruits, pet food and supplies)	38
Heat (i.e., hand pocket warmers, propane fireplaces, woodstoves, butane stoves, non-electric heaters, wood and kindling)	38
Generators	32
Charging Equipment (i.e., batteries, deep cycle RV/golf cart batteries, 12V battery/inverter pack, battery power packs and chargers for phones & laptops)	24
Water (i.e., distilled water, hot water on the woodstove, ice)	20
Warmth Supplies (i.e., blankets, warm clothing like toques & heavy socks, warm bedding, down-filled sleeping bags and emergency blankets)	17
Cooking Equipment (i.e., propane stoves, camp stoves, BBQ grills, butane burners, non-electric cookstoves, manual coffeemakers, can openers, and camping equipment)	17
Communications (i.e., old-school non-power dependent telephones, internet, information sharing, radio, word-of-mouth)	10
Medication	4

Freezers, snow shovels, 4x4 trucks and transportation covers, toiletries and important papers also were mentioned. Good friends and neighbours and the warming centre were appreciated, and several residents were willing to admit that they had not yet prepared for emergencies.

Household Preparedness – Top Items Missing from Emergency Kit

Description	# Times Listed
Fuel/Gas/Diesel (i.e., propane, butane, kerosene, camp stove fuel, engine oil)	35
Lighting (i.e., flashlights, headlamps, portable 12V lights, LED lights, candles, wicks and matches)	32
Heat (i.e., electric heaters, wood stoves, wood)	31
Power (i.e., generator adaptor cord, extension cords, electricity)	21
Charging Equipment (i.e., batteries and solar portable chargers)	15
Food (i.e., canned food, dried food, snack food, milk, fresh vegetables and fruit, Meals Ready to Eat - MREs)	15
Communications (i.e., television, WIFI, radio, satellite phone, wireless phone)	10
Nothing/No shortages	9

Bottled water, salt for icy walkways, non-electric stoves, clean dry clothes, sleep, husbands, and cash were also mentioned as missing. Some admitted to not having any emergency kit yet.



Household Preparedness – Strengths & Shortcomings of Household Emergency Plans

Strengths	# Times Listed
Prepared and Coped Well	20
Plenty of food	7
Woodburning stove	6
Warm clothing	2
Propane stove	2
Propane hot water tank	2
Camping Gear/Camper	2
Enough wood	1
Generator	1
Shortcomings	# Times Listed
Not enough Fuel	10
Not prepared enough for 7+ days without power	8
Lack of preparedness	7
No Heat/not enough heat	7
No Generator	5
Not enough wood	4
No woodstove	3
Not enough candles	2
No alternate cooking equipment	2

Individual shortcomings included lack of showers and internet as well as insufficient batteries, food, alternate lighting, power for refrigerators and freezers.

Neighbourhood Level Feedback – Help Received

Help Received	# Times Listed
• Warming Centre (meals, sleeping, social, charging, etc.)	27
• Fuel (propane, butane, camp stove fuel)	19
• Welcomed neighbours to share resources (food, warmth, power, etc.)	14
• Shared or repaired generator	14
• Food/Groceries	12
• Check-ins	8
• Firewood	7
• Information	4
• Candles	4
• Cleared driveway	3
• Camp stove	1
• Spare batteries	1
• Towed vehicle	1
No Help Received	3
No Help Needed	2

Neighbourhood Level Feedback – Help Received

Help Provided	# Times Listed
• Volunteered at Warming Centre, set up/close, provided supplies	17
• Shared home, meals and food	17
• Shared / repaired generator	11
• Provided fuel, propane, butane	10
• Checked on others	10
• Provided rides or delivered supplies	7
• Shared firewood	7
• Assisted others as needed	7
• Shared information	4
• Cleared driveways	4
• Provided lighting	4
• Shared camp stove, butane stove	2
No Help Provided	8

Note: Some folks did not feel qualified as “needy” so went without.

Neighbourhood Preparedness – Interested to Learn More

Yes = 26

No = 34

Local / Regional Level Feedback – Warming Centre Services Received

Yes = 26

No = 42



Local / Regional Level Feedback – Warming Centre Services Most Appreciated

Description	# Times Listed
• Meals and hot drinks	23
• Warmth	10
• Charging	8
• Socialization	5
• Internet	5
• Sleeping	4
• Information	2



Local / Regional Level Feedback – Level of Information Received

Yes = 44

No = 28

If not, what information did you need that you didn't get? Please describe.

Description	# Times Listed
• BC Hydro Updates	10
• Warming Centre Updates	1
• Door-to-Door Information Updates	6
• Supply Distribution Information	1
• Community Updates	6
• Reliable, Centralized Information Source	5

Local / Regional Level Feedback –Information Sources

Description	# Times Listed
Facebook	39
Word of Mouth	32
Connect Rocket	19
Warming Centre	17
BC Hydro	8
Radio, Internet, Village emails, weather	5
SRD Website (Regional EOC page)	1

Local / Regional Level Feedback –Interest in Volunteering for Emergency Program

Yes = 19

No = 39

Local / Regional Level Feedback – Emergency Program Volunteering Interests

Description	# Times Listed
• Emergency Preparedness	2
• Emergency Support Services	1
• Community Organization	1
• Communications	3
• Where needed	6
• Warming Centre	6
• Transportation	2
• Supply Distribution	2

Crown Corporation Level Feedback – BC Hydro

Description	# Times Listed
Did the best they could in challenging weather	39
Better updates regarding power restoration progress	14
Trees near power lines need to be maintained regularly	6
Costs to residents were too high (fuel for generators, loss of food, etc.)	3

Crown Corporation Level Feedback – BC Hydro – Ideas for Future Improvement

Description	# Times Listed
Trees near power lines need to be maintained regularly	19
Better updates regarding power restoration progress	6
BC Hydro should reimburse losses	1

Provincial Level Feedback – Forest Service Road Condition and Maintenance

Description	# Times Listed
Roads were terrible and need to be at least passable	45
Better road and tree maintenance needed	43
Road needs more/better grading, gravel/sand in bad weather	12
Did the best they could in challenging weather	9
More frequent snow clearing/more snow removal equipment	9

Provincial Level Feedback – Forest Service Road Ideas for Future Improvement

Description	# Times Listed
Better road/tree/brush/grading maintenance	30
Finish chip-sealing the road / pave the road	6
Province to hold contractors accountable	6
More frequent snow clearing/more snow removal equipment	4
Emergency Funding/Additional Resources for emergency situations	3
More gravel/sand in bad weather conditions	1
Better communications on road conditions	1
Transfer road maintenance to Ministry of Forests	1
Camera and/or weather station at Bull Lake Summit	1

Miscellaneous – Ideas for Future Community Improvement

Description	# Times Listed
Promote/teach personal/business preparedness • annual community exercises • winter preparedness checklist • stock up on food & supplies • share generators and teach generator safety	25
Community Support • large generators for smaller communities • generators for sharing around community • Internet service • Better communications • Fair distribution of assistance for all (food, fuel, etc.) • Community stores emergency supplies and sells at reasonable prices • Municipal firewood supply for emergencies • Research best options for energy, self-sufficiency, flood mitigation	20
Backup power options • Hydro power • Backup generator for hot water system • Locally produced power in an isolated grid • Other charging stations besides Warming Centres • BC Hydro provides generators and fuel to everyone in extended outages	9
Increase fuel storage (gas, diesel, propane, etc.)	8
Better options and alternatives for supply distribution • Barge deliveries • Coast Guard • Water transportation options	6
Develop a Community Emergency Plan with input from everyone about who is responsible for what • Collaborate with neighbouring communities • Draft a plan for dealing with extended power outages • Share experiences and strategies • Develop phone tree or neighbourhood pod system for community check-ins	6
Warming Centre suggestions • Start sooner • Providing sleeping area • Have frozen meals ready to go for future activations • Organize activities	5
Better community involvement/more volunteers • List of positions/service options • Sign-up for volunteers	5
Alternate heat and cooking options (woodstove, propane, etc.)	4
Increase firewood supplies	3

Miscellaneous – Additional Questions, Comments or Concerns

Description	# Times Listed
Thank you! - Volunteers and emergency staff for all the help! - Everyone for donations of fuel, groceries and support. - Coast Guard for all their help! We are lucky to have them. - BC Hydro for all the hard work! - Emergency responders for checking on most vulnerable. - Opportunity to provide feedback and learn from our experience. - Opportunity to shop online and get free grocery delivery. - Communities did well, considering the circumstances. - Local governments did an excellent job responding to situation. - We succeeded! No lives lost!	33
Community Suggestions:	
Promote emergency preparedness.	3
Need a plan to provide shelter and warmth for pets too.	2
Businesses need to increase fuel storage.	2
Develop buddy system for Seniors via Seniors Society.	1
Contract annual chimney cleaning service (SRD pays for transportation, accommodation & public notices while residents pay for actual service)	1
Earlier food delivery would have been helpful.	1
Need to develop an evacuation plan that includes road closure options.	1
Consider setting up Neighbourhood groups to promote regular check-ins.	1
Store should have a generator to stay open and provide service.	1
Concerns:	
Concern for people struggling in silence, unable to reach out for help!	1
Concern re thefts of fuel and wood as well as price gouging of fuel supplies.	1
Concerns regarding lack of COVID protocols in Warming Centre	1
BC Hydro should consider: - Power from Zeballos Lake directly. - Separate Zeballos and Tahsis feeds. - Develop plans for reducing lengthy outages for remote communities. - Tree removal along hydro lines.	4
Roads: - Transfer road maintenance to Ministry of Forests. - Fix the road. - Improve road maintenance and sanding to keep roads open.	3

Thank you all for helping us better understand your community's needs.