



# City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 18, 2018 #18-47

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## **City Provides Emergency Services for Camp Residents Displaced By Extreme Weather Event**

**Maple Ridge, BC:** On Friday, September 14, Maple Ridge was hit with an extreme weather event in the late afternoon. A strong thunderstorm hit Maple Ridge's downtown and surrounding areas with driving rain and hail. The extraordinary volume and intensity of the storm resulted in first responders and City Operations staff deployed to deal with calls for service related to flash flooding.

The Maple Ridge Fire Department was dispatched to the tent encampment on 223 Street at St. Anne Avenue. As a result of flooding the department ordered that the electricity to the camp washroom and shower facility be cut by BC Hydro to prevent injury or death. The Fire Department also noted significant hail damage to tents and temporary structures and recommended the evacuation of the site and activated the City's Emergency Support Services (ESS) team. All residents of the camp were offered emergency shelter.

A warming bus was brought to the camp location while City staff and ESS volunteers worked to establish the reception centre and emergency shelter at the Greg Moore Youth Centre. Thirty people displaced from the camp were taken to the Reception Centre where they were provided with food and sleeping accommodations.

Despite the offer of assistance and the advice of the Fire Department, approximately 20 to 25 camp residents adamantly refused to leave the camp site.

The Greg Moore Youth Centre acted as the reception centre on Friday and Saturday evening and on Sunday evening they moved the reception centre and emergency lodging to the Maple Ridge Alliance Church. The number of people seeking meals and overnight lodging declined throughout the weekend.

The City's ESS team closed the Reception Centre and emergency shelter on Monday as camp residents are now accessing services from other agencies. The City will work with the BC Provincial Government to recover the costs associated with the emergency response activation.

"I would like to thank the ESS volunteers and City staff who responded quickly to deal with this situation. Our team moved quickly to establish the reception centre and accommodations for those requiring assistance. This is what our team trains for," said Maple Ridge Mayor Nicole Read.

For more information on this release, please contact Fire Chief, Howard Exner at [hexner@mapleridge.ca](mailto:hexner@mapleridge.ca) or by phone at 604-463-3055