



Media Release

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City acknowledges the dedication of ESS volunteers

The City of Vernon proudly acknowledges and celebrates the unwavering dedication of volunteer Emergency Support Services (ESS) responders. These remarkable individuals are at the core of our community's disaster response efforts, helping to provide for the care, safety and well-being of those impacted by emergency situations.

Being an ESS volunteer is more than just showing up for an incident; it's a process that starts well before a disaster strikes and continues well after. With year-round participation, training and program delivery development, ESS volunteers stay informed and up-to-date on changes to programs and policies.

An experienced and well practiced ESS team is more capable for registering and assisting evacuees. The important work of orienting and training new volunteers takes time. If this is completed during a response, it often means redirecting people from program delivery which can slow down processes and put added strain on the Reception Center during critical times.

The efficiency of Vernon's ESS program during its most recent activation is a testament to the dedication of our volunteers and their investment of their time, training and practicing throughout the year.

"We are truly blessed to have such a large group of caring, knowledgeable and dedicated ESS volunteers in Vernon," said Sue Saunders, Vernon's Emergency Program Coordinator. "When incidents occur, it's invaluable to have volunteers who have developed the skills used in response."

The City commends the ESS volunteers in Vernon and throughout the province of BC and the work they've done throughout the fire season.

Vernon ESS has received more than 100 new volunteer applications. Those applications are still being processed. As ESS volunteerism is a year-round commitment, we will be reaching out to applicants in the near future to discuss the available volunteer opportunities.

A thank you banner, provided by Wayside, is now at Kal Tire Place, available just inside the main entrance on the concourse. It's there for community members to express their appreciation and gratitude to emergency responders and ESS volunteers.

For more information on becoming an ESS volunteer for future responses, please contact the City of Vernon Emergency Response Coordinator at www.vernon.ca/ess.



Between August 17 to August 31, Vernon's ESS program assisted 2,467 evacuees. This is slightly fewer than the nearly 3,000 evacuees who were assisted at the Vernon ESS Reception Centre during the six-week period of the 2021 White Rock Lake wildfire. This exceptional response is possible thanks in large part to the efforts of a strongly dedicated team of volunteers.



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