



Update: 'Pop-up' drug consumption site

December 30, 2016

It has come to the City's attention that a 'pop-up' drug consumption site has been set up at the City Hall parking lot. The City wishes to alert all residents that this site has not been authorized by City of Nanaimo Council nor health authorities. The City warns participants that the safety of such 'pop-up' sites are not certain and advises against their use.

The City supports a response to prevent overdose deaths, but stresses that such a response needs to comply with provincial health standards to ensure the safety of the users. Unregulated sites are a serious public health risk, which is a matter beyond the powers of a local government to address. Consequently, the City has asked Vancouver Island Health Authority and the RCMP to take immediate action to address the risk caused by this unregulated site, to ensure the safety of the participants.

The City has been working with health authorities, the RCMP and other community partners to establish long term strategies to address overdose prevention, as well as stop gap measures to quickly establish an overdose prevention site during the interim while the long-term strategies are being implemented. The City is pressing to have such a site identified and appropriately resourced and staffed, in compliance with provincial health standards, as soon as possible. The City requests all participants at the 'pop-up' sites to work cooperatively with health authorities to provide a safe response through regulated sites.

The City's Service and Resources Centre (SARC) is currently open to the public with security personnel onsite. City Hall is closed to the public due to low staffing levels over the Christmas break. Notices have been posted on City Hall sending the public to the SARC building.