

City shares concerns on discarded sharps (needles) with Interior Health

(Penticton, BC – June 20, 2019) – Penticton Mayor, John Vassilaki, along with City staff, met with officials today from Interior Health for the purpose of discussing discarded needles in the community and how their safe disposal can be better managed.

“My goal this morning was to have an open and frank discussion with Interior Health officials on the challenging issue of improperly disposed needles that are causing great concern to the residents of Penticton,” said Penticton Mayor, John Vassilaki. “While we discussed and agreed on a number of points, including the recognition of the issue’s complexity, the need for a collaborative approach, and the importance of continuing needle disposal education, I believe there is still ground to cover when it comes to receiving clear data on needle usage, along with who, from Interior Health, is in the best position to address this problem.”

“Today’s meeting was useful in providing an opportunity to share our perspectives,” said Chief Administrative Officer, Donny van Dyk. “City staff will continue to work with Interior Health to determine how a collaborative solution can be found. If a collaborative solution can not be arrived at, staff will bring other options to Council for their consideration.”

Key information provided to Mayor Vassilaki and City staff included clarification that discarded needles do not spread disease once they have been left on the ground or exposed to the elements. Interior Health also committed to appear before Council during a public meeting to outline and help explain the various strategies and programs currently in place to address the problem of improperly discarded needles.

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Contacts:

Donny van Dyk
Chief Administrative Officer
City of Penticton
250-490-2407

Philip Cooper
Communication Manager
City of Penticton

250-490-2583