

Canadian Red Cross is coming to Penticton to prepare businesses for any disaster

(Penticton, BC – November 25, 2019) – It's not a question of whether a natural disaster will happen in the South Okanagan – but a question of when. So says the Canadian Red Cross, which will provide tips to business leaders at FutureBiz Penticton on Wednesday, Dec. 4.

The non-profit organization aims to raise awareness of disaster risks and help businesses prepare for any crisis. Two Red Cross representatives will cap off FutureBiz business forum with a tabletop disaster simulation designed to test attendees' skills to see how they would react in a real-world situation.

"Here in B.C., flooding and fires are regular events and the risks are increasing. We have to start thinking of disasters as something that are going to happen and be prepared to take concrete steps to mitigate the impacts," said Liam Devine, an Emergency Management Coordinator with the Red Cross, who oversees more than 100 disaster responders in the B.C. Interior.

"People see the Red Cross as helping people in need. We do support individuals, families and whole communities during an emergency. However, disaster prevention and mitigation are the future of emergency management, and the Red Cross is committed to helping people be ready," Devine added. He'll be joined in Penticton by Carla Taylor, International Operations Advisor at the Red Cross, who works with staff and volunteers around the world to prepare for likely crises. This often includes risk assessments, training and organizational reviews.

"Planning is important, but the real learning happens when people are given a space to actively apply their knowledge to potential situations they may face in the future," said Taylor.

FutureBiz is organized by the City of Penticton's Economic Development department with the goal of empowering businesses to be locally and globally competitive. Last year's inaugural event was hugely successful, with 175 participants.

"Data breaches, ransomware attacks, property crime and natural hazards – it can all feel a bit overwhelming for business owners to figure out where to start. At FutureBiz, you'll gain access to some tried-and-true templates and tools that you can put into effect right away," said event organizer Jennifer Vincent of Penticton's Economic Development department. "This forum is an opportunity to come together and focus. Being caught unprepared may make the difference between business interruption and business disaster."

This year's event includes a host of expert speakers hailing from throughout North America. This includes keynote Abigail Cabunoc Mayes of the Mozilla Foundation, Fire Chief Larry Watkinson and Deputy Fire Chief Chris Forster of the Penticton Fire Department, Allison Markin of communications consultancy All She Wrote, Garland Sharratt, an information security architect and consultant, Greg Perkins of Liahona Security, and Nicole Clark of Community Futures Okanagan Similkameen. Get your tickets at futurebizpenticton.com.

Event Details

FutureBiz Penticton

Wednesday, Dec. 4

9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Penticton Trade & Convention Centre

www.futurebizpenticton.com

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