

Community Leader Retiring from Emergency Support Services

(Penticton, BC – April 28, 2021) – The City of Penticton is wishing a fond farewell and happy retirement to Alida Erickson, Penticton’s Emergency Support Services (ESS) Director. Alida officially started with ESS on October 22, 2008, and has been a volunteer since 2007. Her last day is May 1, 2021. Over her 14 year career, she has invested thousands of hours into the community and region, responding to people impacted by house fires, floods, wild fires and disasters.

As ESS Director, Alida was responsible for working with over twenty partners and a team of over 40 volunteers, to lead Penticton’s ESS program. ESS is available to individuals impacted by an emergency, who have no other means to deal with immediate needs such as family, friends, or insurance. The ESS Director must be available at all times of the day.

She’s arrived at neighbours’ homes at 4 a.m. She’s held newborn babies in the back of a car in the middle of winter. She’s overseen over one-hundred emergencies in the South Okanagan, and was integral in supporting the development of ESS teams in communities throughout the region.

Some of her most significant times leading the team include:

- Overseeing evacuee planning for over 4,000 properties in the City and regional district during the Christie Mountain wildfire in August 2020,
- Acting as a provincial reception centre during summer 2017 when several communities across BC were evacuated at the same time,
- Recruiting over 30 local businesses, from hotels to restaurants, to provide services to evacuees during an emergency, and
- Responding to numerous house fires at all hours of the day and during any weather event.

“We thank Alida for her dedication to our community,” says Mayor John Vassilaki. “She has been called away from birthday parties and important family events in order to support our community. We thank her for her service and the positive example she has set by ensuring Penticton is a safe community.”

May 2 to 8, 2021 is Emergency Preparedness Week and the City of Penticton would like to remind residents to visit www.penticton.ca/emergencypreparedness to learn more about how to prepare for emergencies, such as a 72-hour kit and ensuring they have appropriate insurance.

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