

This is a test of City's alert system

(Penticton, BC – July 11, 2022) – If you've signed up for the City of Penticton's new emergency text notification system, you'll be getting a message on July 14 at 11 a.m.

This will be the first test of the system, which is designed to ensure the public has quick access to emergency activations, alerts and orders.

"During an emergency, time is of the essence, and we want to deliver vital information as efficiently as possible," says Mayor John Vassilaki. "By signing up for the text notification system, residents can ensure they get emergency information directly to their mobile phone. If you haven't signed up yet, I'd encourage everyone to do so."

Currently, residents can subscribe to receive email notifications from the City of Penticton on news, meetings, events and emergencies. Subscribers to the emergency text notification service will only receive texts during an active emergency when an evacuation alert or order has been issued in the city as a result of a flood, fire or other emergency or disaster. Residents can sign up by visiting penticton.ca/subscribe.

"This test will allow residents to see what they can expect if an emergency alert is issued and allow us to see if there's any bugs we need to fix in the system," says JoAnne Kleb, the City's communications and engagement manager. "It also will increase awareness and highlight the importance of more residents signing up. This doesn't replace traditional ways of getting the word out – news releases, social media and the City website – but it means you don't have to search for it. During an emergency, that saved time can be priceless."

With temperatures rising, the City is turning its attention to preparedness this week and along with the test of the alert system, a new podcast on tackling wildfires has also been released. Residents are invited to check their favorite streaming services or the City's website for the next episode of PenTALKton to hear Fire Chief Larry Watkinson and Emergency Program Coordinator Brittany Seibert talk about technological innovations in fighting wildfires and what residents can do to be prepared.

"Being prepared for a wildfire requires some planning but it comes with a lot of potential payoff," says Seibert. "On the podcast we talk about simple steps you can take to make sure your home is FireSmart, what should go into your emergency bag, how to plan for taking of your pets. We talk about a lot of practical things that help reduce the stress of dealing with the actual emergency."

For more information, on being prepared for floods, wildfires or other emergencies visit <https://www.penticton.ca/city-services/fire-services/fire-safety/emergency-preparedness>

Contacts:

JoAnne Kleb
Communications and Engagement Manager
City of Penticton
250-490-2586

Shane Mills
Senior Communications Advisor
City of Penticton
250-490-2583