



## Piers Island Emergency Program Report July 2020 to June 2021

During the July 2020 to June 2021 reporting period the Piers Island Emergency Program activities were largely shaped by the pandemic. All Southern Gulf Islands Emergency Program meetings were held virtually. Although in-person meetings were sorely missed, Zoom enabled Brigitte Prochaska, Area Coordinator, to address issues and provide training more frequently. Rather than meet four times per year with Island Coordinators she was able to schedule Zoom meetings with us several times per month.

Every part of British Columbia is mandated to participate in a locally organized emergency response program. The Piers Island Emergency Program (PIEP) is part of the Southern Gulf Islands Area Program and provides services during an island emergency. Its major task is to support the work of the Piers Island Volunteer Fire Department (PIVFD). The PIVFD responds to the emergency site while PIEP members work off site at an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). If community support is needed members can set up a Reception Centre (RC).

### **Duty Officer**

The major responsibility of the Emergency Community Coordinator (ECC) is to assemble the Emergency Program (EP) team in an island emergency. If the Coordinator is absent a member of the team serves as **duty officer** and responds accordingly.

### **Public Alert Notification System (PANS)**

Recently the Capital Regional District upgraded the Southern Gulf Island's free emergency notification system known as PANS. Information about the upgrade was emailed to all property owners and highlighted the need for everyone to register for PANS including those who previously signed up for the old PANS system. To register go to [crd.bc.ca/pans](http://crd.bc.ca/pans)

### **Telephone "Tree"**

The Emergency Program maintains a phone/email list of all property owners/occupants for circumstances where PANS is not utilized. Please ensure Velvet Warrior, Deputy Coordinator, has your latest contact information. Her email address is [velvetw@telus.net](mailto:velvetw@telus.net)

EP team members recently delivered an updated *Piers Island Emergency Procedures* pamphlet to all Piers Island properties. It contains important information about how to respond to island emergencies including fire/evacuation, power outages or water events. Importantly, the pamphlet lists cell numbers of Emergency Program team members to contact as needed in an emergency. Please ensure any visitors or tenants are aware of the emergency procedures.

### **Fire/Evacuation**

In the event of fire the fire chief may order a full evacuation of Piers. The order is unlikely to be preceded by an alert. If circumstances require only a partial evacuation the Chief will direct the Emergency Program team to call the affected properties.

### **Power Outages**

Piers Island usually experiences power outages a few times each year, some involving North Saanich. This past year was no exception. To report an outage or for information updates go to [bchydro.com](http://bchydro.com)

If there is an on-island safety concern the fire chief will direct the EP team to contact residents.

### **Water Emergencies**

Should a situation involving the Piers Island water system require some or all islanders to be contacted the PIID water trustee will ask the Emergency Program team to do so.

### **Emergency Preparedness Week**

The first week of May each year is designated Emergency Preparedness Week. This past May, to encourage islanders to “be prepared”, Sandy Brunham, Deputy Coordinator, organized a contest to raise awareness about having an emergency plan. If you have not already done so, please take the time to put together a “grab and go” bag, one for each household member, as part of your plan.

### **Volunteers:**

A large complement of Piers Islanders are involved in the Emergency Program. I am pleased to report that several volunteers have recently become part of the program. Welcome to Mari Warrior, Judy Brooks and Libby Kaul. They join Gloria Morson, Sandy Brunham, Velvet Warrior, Kerry Wheeler, Uta Bryce, Patti LL, Kerry Keats, Gary Glover, Ginny Macoun and Evey Gabilie as EP team members. Two other islanders, Wendy Smart and Linda Vanden Berg assist with telephone tree phoning. Five others are evacuation boat operators: Mike Smart, Brian Wheeler, Barry Tate, Gary Glover and Rick Schnurr. Finally, Kerry Keats and Gary Glover serve as Commissioners representing Piers Island on the Southern Gulf Islands Advisory Commission. Thank you to all EP volunteers. Thank you also to Jackie Charlesworth who retired from the program after serving for many years.

Respectfully submitted:

Frances Glover, Emergency Community Coordinator,  
Piers Island Emergency Program