



## **News Release**

### **Sunshine Coast Regional District Launches Illegal Dumping Prevention Program**

Sechelt, BC— June 18, 2018—This summer, the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD) is launching a “Keep Our Community Clean” program aimed at preventing illegal dumping across the region.

“Like many communities in BC and Canada, illegal dumping is a concern here on the Sunshine Coast,” says Robyn Cooper, SCRD Manager of Solid Waste Services. “Dump sites can pollute, affect wildlife habitat and interfere with enjoying the outdoors -- this program will help raise awareness of the issue of illegal dumping and how to report an illegal dump site in our region.”

As part of ongoing initiatives to stop illegal dumping in the region, the SCRD in partnership with the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities has developed a public educational video about this issue. The video highlights the impact of illegal dumping and reminds residents how to report an illegal dump site.

“It is necessary for people to understand that it is against the law to improperly dispose of waste,” says Cooper. “It’s not just the person dumping who is responsible, it’s the person who owns the material. If you ask someone to dispose garbage for you, ask for a receipt as proof it was disposed properly at the landfill or transfer station.”

Dumping waste such as garbage, hazardous waste and even green waste is illegal, with fines up to \$1 million or six months in jail.

Residents who witness illegal dumping or spot an illegal dump site in our region should document as much information about violators and their vehicles as possible and note down the exact location. This information should be reported to the Ministry of Environment’s 24-hour hotline (RAPP line) at 1.877.952.7277 (#7277 from cellphones). Ministry staff have the authority to issue fines.

The SCRD continues to work on a number of initiatives to address illegal dumping in our region such as a collaboration with multiple on-coast government agencies on prevention and enforcement solutions. The SCRD coordinates the Good Samaritan Program, which funds tipping fees of community clean-ups of illegal dump sites. The SCRD also hosts the annual Backroad Trash Bash event which last year had 82 volunteers clean up 7.8 tonnes of material from forests and backroads in the West Howe Sound and Elphinstone areas.

This year's 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Backroad Trash Bash is set to take place on Saturday, September 15 at the Pender Harbour Lions Park, focusing on the clean-up of dump sites in the Pender Harbour and Egmont areas.

Cooper says a key message that needs to come across is that most commonly dumped materials can be properly disposed of for little to no cost, either at SCRD waste management facilities or through recycling depots.

For example, large appliances such as washers, dryers and stoves can be dropped off at the Sechelt Landfill and Pender Harbour Transfer Station for \$70 per tonne which is on average \$5 to \$6 for a stove and \$10 for a washer/dryer. Small appliances and electronics can be dropped off at the Gibsons and GRIPS recycling depots for free.

"Blaming the cost of tipping fees for illegal dumping is inaccurate. In areas of British Columbia with lower or no tipping fees, illegal dumping still occurs," says Cooper. "The majority of residents living on the Sunshine Coast make the time and effort to dispose of or recycle their materials responsibly and do not illegally dump. We want to thank them for keeping our community clean."

To view the educational video and find out more information about the Good Samaritan Program and this year's Backroad Trash Bash, visit: [www.scrd.ca/illegal dumping](http://www.scrd.ca/illegal dumping) and [www.scrd.ca/trashbash](http://www.scrd.ca/trashbash).

#### **About Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC)**

The AVICC is a body formed for the purpose of representing in one organization the various municipalities, regional districts and other local governments of Vancouver Island, Sunshine Coast, Powell River, Central Coast and North Coast. It is one of five area associations of local governments within BC, operating under the umbrella of the Union of BC Municipalities.

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