



Comox News

We respectfully acknowledge that we live, work and play on the traditional lands of the K'ómoks First Nation ... Gila'kasla ... Hay ch q'

February 2016

The Town of Comox Community Newsletter

New fire prevention vehicle



prevention programs. The newest vehicle provided is a mini cargo van.

We couldn't be more pleased, as Comox Valley Dodge provides a free lease for its vehicles. Vancouver Island Insurance Centre has also been providing free insurance for the vehicles for many years. It all adds up to a great contribution to our community with little to no cost to taxpayers.

The new Dodge will be busy attending public events and delivering many of our community programs.

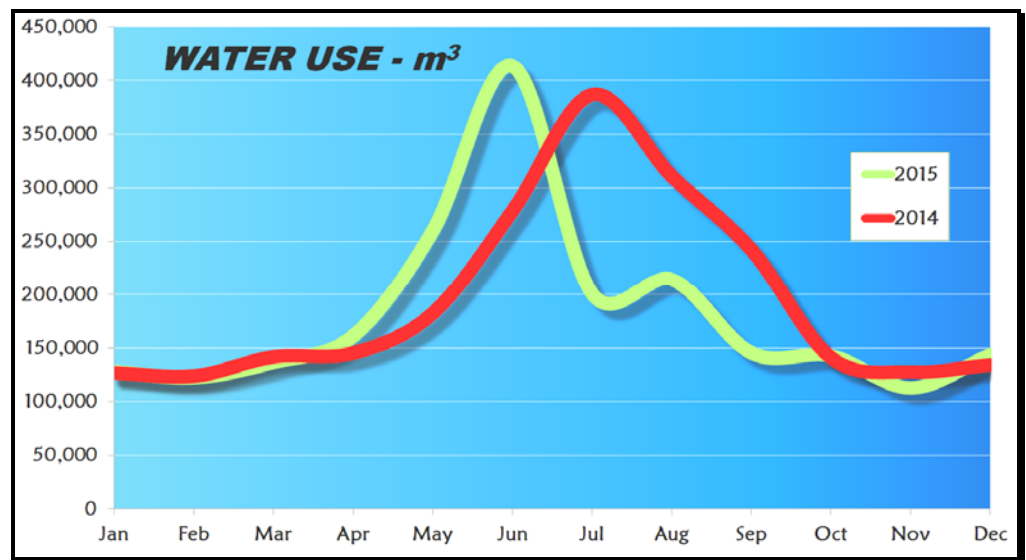
For the past fourteen years Comox Valley Dodge has been providing the Comox

Fire Department with a high profile vehicle that is used daily for many fire

Inside:

- Comox firefighters hosting another Firefighter Youth Camp
- Switch to save
- Town presents coastal redwood
- Brooklyn Creek channel enhancement
- Comox Community Centre wins Comox Valley's Reader's Choice Awards
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2015 Water Use



Thanks to the conservation efforts of Town of Comox residents and businesses, as well as leak detection efforts, our total water use for 2015 was down 7.6% over that of 2014!

We had a particularly hot and dry summer last year, which led to extended Stage 3 watering restrictions. Conservation and leak detection efforts saved us over 166,000

cubic meters of water, resulting in a savings of over \$100,000 in water purchases last year.

Comox firefighters hosting another Firefighter Youth Camp

Comox Firefighters will be hosting their ninth Firefighter Youth Camp between March 20 and 24, 2016. Every other year since 2000, Comox Fire Rescue has hosted a 4-day Firefighter Youth Camp for approximately 36 Comox Valley high school students.

The camp is open to both male and female students in grades 11 and 12, and has the goal of providing leadership and life experience skills that can be applied now and later in life. Students work in the training centre (located behind the fire station), working in teams through many different leadership

and command training scenarios.

Fire Chief, Gord Schreiner, is pleased to be able to host yet another Youth Camp, and to have the opportunity to work closely with many of the great youths in our community. He thanks the Comox fire-fighters as well as those from the other local departments, without which the camp would not be possible. He also thanks the many sponsors who support the camps with donations.

Over 600 students have attended youth camp programs at the Comox Fire Training Centre over the past 17 years. Watch our

video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtg3Urx4N8U>) and if you know of any local high school students who may be interested in participating, have them talk to their work experience counselors.



Switch to save

In 2012, Council adopted lower water rates for metered residential customers who use less than 42 cubic meters of water per quarter, and who enroll in metered billing. Since 2012, approximately 250 metered residential customers have made the switch to metered billing, including five strata developments. All could save up to \$147 per year.

This past fall we wrote to over 500 strata unit owners in the twenty strata developments that have not yet switched. Strata unit owners are even more likely to save as they do not typically have as much outdoor water use during the summer months. Collectively they could have saved \$70,000 in 2015 by switching.

As a result of that publicity, the Town received an application from the Green Gables strata on Anderton Road to start saving in 2016, adding 9 more customers who will be saving money on their water bills.

It isn't too late for other metered water customers to switch – you have until March to apply for 2016. Owners of metered single family homes can also make the switch to save up to \$147 per year. If you don't know how much water you use or whether you could save, please visit <http://comox.ca/water> for more information. There you will find a year-end report showing monthly water use for all metered residential customers, including an estimate

showing how much you could have saved in 2015 if you paid by the meter. If you don't know your meter's MXU number, please contact us at Town Hall.

Customers have until mid-March to enroll in metered billing for 2016, or to switch back to flat rates again if they prefer. One size doesn't fit all, and the choice of rates is yours!

Town presents coastal redwood tree



In November, Comox Council presented a coastal redwood tree and plaque to the City of Courtenay, commemorating their 100th year anniversary. Comox Mayor Paul Ives and Courtenay Mayor Larry Jangula came together to celebrate a long partnership with the planting of the tree in Simms Millennium Park in Courtenay.

The tree is an evergreen that grows between 200 to 300 feet tall, and was chosen for its strength, prominence and long life span.

Brooklyn Creek channel enhancement



The Town has once again been an active partner in the Brooklyn Creek Channel Enhancement Project, which aims to increase the productivity of wild salmon stocks in the Brooklyn Creek, and improve pedestrian access along the Creek and within Mack Laing Park. Brooklyn Creek is an important fish producing watershed, historically supporting chum, coho and pink salmon, as well as cutthroat trout.

In 2013, the Town collaborated with School District 71 to have a portion of the environmentally sensitive areas surrounding the Phil and Jennie Gaglardi Academy transferred to the Town. Brooklyn Creek runs through the western portion of this land, and this section

was the focus of restoration works this past summer.

In the late 1960s or early 1970s, this section of stream was straightened to follow a newly installed sanitary pipe. Over the years, as the watershed developed further and peak flows increased, this straight stretch provided little habitat for fish due to lack of stream cover, pools and substrate for spawning.

The project focused on two parts: restore healthy fish habitat, and encourage walking and a connection with nature. Details of the work included the following:

- Removing several alder trees that were either hazardous or within the new channel alignment;

- Planting willows along the stream banks to improve fish habitat and add shade to the stream;
- Installing several rooted trees into the stream channel to help provide an environment for spawning and insect production;
- Placing large rocks into the stream to create riffles, or shallow rocky areas, which maintain pools and spawning beds and where insects like to hang out;
- Installing stumps and other woody debris into the channel banks for aesthetics and to support habitat such as for insects, amphibians and birds; and
- Building a new greenway trail that provides a safe and comfortable year round connection to Noel.

An added benefit of the work is that this channel section will now reduce current and future flood levels, as the mat of willow roots, once developed, will reduce erosion risk.

The Town would like to thank partners in the project, including the Phil and Jennie Gaglardi Academy, the Ambleside, Avril Homes, the Brooklyn Creek Watershed Society, Current Environmental, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Investors Group, Island Valley Farms, Pacific Salmon Foundation and Ridgeline Excavating. We also thank Ambleside residents and students from Gaglardi Academy and Isfeld School, who helped to remove invasive English Ivy and plant native trees and shrubs.

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We're on the Web!

See us at:
comox.ca

Comox Community Centre wins Comox Valley Reader's Choice Awards

We are pleased to announce that the Comox Community Centre placed first in two categories of the Comox Valley Reader's Choice Awards, sponsored by the Comox Valley Record – Best Sports Facility and Best Gym.

The Community Centre was renovated in 2011 and its success comes from how the community embraced the changes, including a new fitness area and multi-purpose room. We now have rental space that is flexible enough for a range of events, like large meetings and weddings. And our larger Fitness Studio

has allowed us to add new equipment like the Nu-Step and the Lateral X.

Recreation Director Mandy Johns appreciates the recognition and thanks our customers for the honour. It shows that we are delivering on our number one priority of providing outstanding customer service.

Contact the Comox Community Centre at 250-339-2255 or info@comox.ca for more information on renting the Multi-Purpose Room or visiting the Fitness Studio, and find out why we're rated #1 in the Comox Valley.

Abandoned boats

As a result of several severe winter storms, the Town has received many calls about abandoned boats. First and foremost, these are the responsibility of the owner, and there is little that the Town can do as they are outside of our jurisdiction.

If a boat or wreck is an immediate threat to the environment (leaking oil or fuel) you can help by contacting the Canadian Coast Guard (phone 1-800-889-8852).

Or, if an abandoned boat or wreck is a threat to safe navigation (because it blocks other boats from a passage) you can contact Transport Canada's Navigation Protection Program (phone 1-604-775-8867).

For more information on abandoned boats and wreck's visit the Transport Canada website at www.tc.gc.ca/abandonedboats.

Notices

Business licence renewal School Zones

Business licences must be renewed each year your business is operating in the Town. Fees are due by February 28 of each year. If you have outstanding fees, please ensure they are paid as soon as possible,

The Town would like to remind parents that school zones are very busy areas during times that parents are dropping off and picking up students, and can be unsafe if the following parking and driving practices are not adhered to:

- in loading or bus zones, except as permitted by sign
- across or within 2 metres of private driveways
- within 6 metres of stop signs

Maximum speed limit of 30 kilometres

No U-turns where prohibited

Dog Licences

Just a reminder that all dogs in the Town must have a valid dog licence, which must be renewed each year. Dog licences can be purchased anytime at Town hall or at the SPCA on Ryan Road.

No parking

- In a bike lane
- on sidewalks or boulevards
- in front of or within 5 metres of fire hydrants
- across or within 6 metres of crosswalks
- across or within 6 metres of intersections and public entranceways

Tax Notices

Tax notices will be mailed out in May. If you have not received your tax notice by May 31, please contact the office. More information on your property tax and utility rates will be provided with your tax notice.