



Useful Web Links

January 4, 2008



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Hello everyone:

I hope that each of you had a wonderful Christmas and a very Happy New Year. We spent our Christmas with our children and extended family members and it was great. Somehow though, the time together always seems much too short.

As we look ahead to 2008 there is much to be excited about and obviously some challenges ahead. Today we continue to face the issues related to the ice jam that formed before Christmas. We know that this will require ongoing attention and partnership to ensure that we have safety and certainty for residents and industry alike. The Province will continue to work with our municipal and federal colleagues to manage this issue. I want to express my admiration and sincere thanks to everyone who has worked so tirelessly throughout the last weeks to deal with this significant problem. On the tours of the area that I have taken, there has been a consistent appreciation for the volunteers and workers who have done such a fantastic job. And we know their work continues . . .

2008 is also the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Crown Colony of British Columbia. We want to invite every community to participate in this year-long celebration of our province's cultural diversity, community strength and achievement. Communities can now register to be affiliated with BC150 Years.

Ask Your MLA.

Useful Phone numbers

BC Nurseline: 24 hour,
Toll free 1-866-215-4700

PharmaNet Hotline: Mon-Fri
(8:30-4:30pm) 1-800-387-4700

Health Info Line: Mon-Fri
(8:30-4:30pm) 1-800-465-4911

Victim Link: 7 days a week,
24 hours, 1-800-563-0808

This allows communities, arts groups and event organizers to become part of the interactive online calendar and also gain access to BC150 Years promotional items. Groups can either register directly through the BC150 Years website or through Tourism BC's HelloBC events listings program. If registered through Tourism BC, events will be promoted on both the BC150 Years and HelloBC websites. I look forward to seeing many northern events as part of our special celebration.

2008 will see British Columbia issue one of the most high-tech and durable birth certificates in the world. The new BC birth certificate is made of high-security plastic and will have more than 20 security features. The new certificate is similar in format to a passport and residents will have the option of choosing between two types of certificate – one with individual information only and one that includes parental information. Both certificates are the same size and replace the former large and small size of birth certificates. The introduction of this certificate will not invalidate existing BC birth certificates for the foreseeable future.

Bill and I and our family would like to express our deepest sympathy to Henry Novak and his family on the passing of their beloved Mary Novak. The service was held yesterday and hundreds of members of our community came to demonstrate their love for this very special family. Henry, please know that you and your family will continue to be in our prayers. Mary was a wonderful person and will be deeply missed.

Why not plan to catch a UNBC basketball game this weekend at the tournament being held at the Northern Sports Centre? Our UNBC women's team is playing a number of games, so why not visit the amazing facility and cheer on the team at the same time!

Work continues at full speed next week and my staff and I look forward to serving you throughout 2008.

Until next week,

Shirley

Question of the week:

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR REVIEW RE YOUR PROPERTY ASSESSMENT?

In January, more than 1.78 million property owners across British Columbia will receive their annual assessment notices. This is a reminder to those who own property in British Columbia that the deadline for filing a complaint regarding your 2008 property assessment is Jan. 31, 2008.

Many property owners will note the assessed value of their property has increased. This is certainly a sign of the times. British Columbia's economy is experiencing unprecedented growth – buoyed by increased consumer confidence, one of the lowest unemployment rates in history, and unparalleled investment. In turn, real estate markets in most regions of British Columbia have been very active. For those who have seen their homes appreciate considerably in recent years, and newcomers to British Columbia, here is clarification of the relationship between market value, property assessments and municipal tax rates.

BC Assessment was established as a provincial Crown corporation in 1974 to produce assessments that are fair, equitable and uniform throughout British Columbia. BC Assessment is required to estimate the fair market value of all properties in the province as of July 1 each year.

If you have not received your assessment notice by Jan. 17, please call toll-free 1-866-499-9980 or e-mail ckt@bcassessment.ca to ask BC Assessment for your assessment notice.

When estimating a property's market value, an appraiser analyzes current sales in the area and other characteristics, such as size, age, quality, condition, view and location. If you have any questions or concerns about your assessment, you are welcome to speak to an appraiser at your local BC Assessment office. There may be no need to file a formal complaint if you and your local assessor agree on an assessment adjustment.

Each BC Assessment office offers convenient

customer service options, including counter service during regular business hours, toll-free phone numbers, e-mail and fax. Both BC Assessment's website, www.bcassessment.ca, and your local phone directory feature contact information. They also provide exceptional service to British Columbia's multicultural audiences, through translated online publications and staff who speak multiple languages.

BC Assessment continues to develop new and innovative services to better serve British Columbians, like the online appeal form on BC Assessment's website, www.bcassessment.ca, introduced in January 2007. There is more information than ever before on the websites of BC Assessment and my ministry, in plain language, to help you understand property assessments and appeals. Starting in January 2008, the Assessment and Sales by Address feature will be available year round. This popular online tool allows property owners to compare their assessments to other assessed properties and sold properties in their neighbourhood. If you do not own a computer, please contact your local BC Assessment office and a BC Assessment staff will be happy to assist you. Information on British Columbia's independent complaint and appeal process is outlined on the back of your assessment notice and detailed at www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/parp/. You can also access information on the complaints and assessment appeal process toll-free in North America, by calling 1-877-356-9313. However, if you decide to file a formal complaint, you must do so in writing before the Jan. 31, 2008, deadline. The online version of the complaint form will be available in January 2008 on the BC Assessment website at www.bcassessment.ca.

Every spring, local government taxing authorities set property tax rates, apply them to each property's assessed value and send the owners property tax notices. In incorporated areas like cities, municipalities and villages, the local government collects the taxes; in unincorporated areas, the Surveyor of Taxes is the collector.

BC Assessment is committed to providing a continuous improvement in customer service. This

means going beyond providing fair and equitable assessments, with a service commitment to you to be reliable, timely, accessible, uniform and respectful.

I encourage you to visit BC Assessment's website at www.bcassessment.ca or contact your local BC Assessment office if you have any questions. Again, please keep in mind that if you wish to appeal your 2008 assessment in British Columbia, you must do so in writing by Jan. 31, 2008.

News Around the Province

B.C. BEGINS ISSUING NEW, MORE SECURE BIRTH CERTIFICATES

BC will today begin issuing one of the most high-tech and durable birth certificates in the world. The new B.C. birth certificate is made of high-security plastic, making it extremely durable and enabling more than 20 security features. Some visible security features include:

- When held to the light, irregular marks on the front and back of the certificate align to form a maple leaf;
- Two transparent windows – one with a colour shifting property and one with three floating maple leaves;
- Unique watermark/shadow features; and
- Larger size makes it impractical to carry in a wallet or purse, reducing the chance of loss or theft.

The new certificate is similar in format to a passport and British Columbians have the option of choosing between two types of certificate – one with individual information only and one that includes parental information. Both certificates are the same size and replace the former large and small size of birth certificate.

The introduction of this certificate will not invalidate existing B.C. birth certificates for the foreseeable future and the cost of a birth certificate in B.C. will remain at \$27.

People born in B.C. can apply for a birth certificate at any Vital Statistics or Government Agent office or they can print an online application form and fax or mail the form along with the applicable fee to the Vital Statistics Agency. Additionally, later this month, the Vital Statistics Agency will introduce a new online ordering system so that British Columbians will have the convenience of being able to order birth certificates online. All certificates are mailed or couriered to clients from the Victoria Vital Statistics office. British Columbians interested in learning more about the process for ordering a birth certificate can visit the BC Vital Statistics Agency website at www.vs.gov.bc.ca.

This week's bouquet of recognition goes to...

Grade 11 acting class at DP Todd School
Mrs. Riches acting class collected \$1,260.00 for World Vision to purchase supplies and agricultural needs required for a family to start a business.
Awesome Job Gang!!

Community Announcements

BC Natural Resource Forum & Trade Show January
17th & 18th at the Prince George Civic Centre
Reserve your tickets call 564-3737

Mark your calendar...

- ❖ Nov 28 to Jan 11 Northern Lights Festival
5pm to 9pm weekdays and 5pm – 11pm weekends. Admission is \$10 per vehicle.
- ❖ Jan 10 – Chamber luncheon with Mayor Colin Kinsley at the Ramada Hotel – for more info call the Chamber at 562-2454
- ❖ Jan 19 – Ralph Klein to Speak at 2008 Dr. Bob Ewert Memorial Lecture, Dinner and Dance. Tickets \$100.00 ea for more info call Rob van Adrichem, 960-5622
- ❖ Jan 26 – Feb 2nd- Coldsnap 2008 – The Prince George Winter Music Festival- For Venues and artists performing call Books and Company phone 563-6637

- ❖ Jan 31-Feb 2 – Dinner Theatre at the Ramada Inn, Play is called Self HELP. For tickets call Books and Co. or Studio 2880. For more info call 961-0615
- ❖ Feb 1 – Northern BC Friends of Children 10th Anniversary Gala at the Coast Inn of the North. Tickets available at The friends of Children office phone 564-2271
- ❖ Feb 3 – The 17th Annual Sweetheart Bridal Extravaganza – Prince George Civic Centre 11 am – 5 pm

If you are a non profit organization and would like to advertise an upcoming event or share a story please email [Shirley](mailto:shirley@shirleybondmla.bc.ca)

Thank you for taking the time to read my newsletter. If you would like to see something specific in the next edition of Ask Your MLA, please [email me](mailto:shirley@shirleybondmla.bc.ca). If you know someone who would like to receive our newsletter, email their name so we can add them to our list.



My second e-newsletter, People, Places & Projects showcases great people and projects in our area. To subscribe to People, Places & Projects, [click here](#). To read past editions to go: [People, Places & Projects online](#).

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