



# NEWS RELEASE



## Residents permitted to return to 100 Mile House and Area

Saturday July 22, 2017 – 2:00pm

An area from the North end of Lac La Hache through to the entirety of the District of 100 Mile House within the Cariboo Regional District has been identified as having a reduced fire risk which allows residents to return to the area.

The area has been reduced from an Evacuation Order to an Evacuation Alert. Please refer to the map available on the Cariboo Regional District website to see the specific area that has been downgraded: <http://bit.ly/2tQx3cM>

While residents are able to return to the 100 Mile House and surrounding area, nearby locations remain on evacuation order and security will be in place to enforce the order in those areas. Wildfire remains active in the area, and an evacuation order area to the northwest of 100 Mile House has been expanded. Everyone returning to the area is asked to exercise caution to ensure their personal safety.

Residents are returning to an area that was profoundly affected by wildfire. Services that residents are used to or rely on, such as grocery and health care, may be limited for some time. Anyone choosing to return to the area should ensure that they have a full tank of gas as well as basic necessities including food and prescriptions for up to seven days.

It is important to note that air quality remains poor as a result of smoke from nearby fire activity. Those with respiratory issues, small children and the elderly should consider this before they choose to return to the area. For those who choose to wait to return to the area at this time, Emergency Social Services will remain available for them until services can be restored.

For residents staying south of 100 Mile House, the route home is clear along highway 97 north. For those residents staying north of Williams Lake, the route home will be along highway 16 to highway 5 then along highway 24, as highway 97 remains closed due to evacuation orders.

Those who were removed from the community via bus will be able to return home via BC Transit within 48 hours. Door-to-door bus service for those with mobility issues will be available on Monday afternoon. Sign up for these services at your closest ESS centre or by calling 1-800-585-9559.

An information centre with many resources will be set up at the South Cariboo Recreation Centre and will be open 8am – 8pm daily until need subsides. Red Cross services will be available to anyone returning to the area that requires assistance. They can be reached at 1-800-863-6582.

At this time donations of goods like food, clothing and household items are not being accepted. It is recognized that many people want to help those affected by the wildfires and this goodwill is much appreciated. However, CRD communities do not have the resources to manage donations of goods at this time. Response efforts are focused on wildfire suppression, animal welfare and readying communities for the return of evacuated residents. A need for specific donations may be identified at a later date. If so, this information will be shared with the community.

Since this area remains on evacuation alert, anyone returning there must continue to be prepared to evacuate their premises or property should an evacuation be required. As with previous evacuation alerts, residents will be given as much advance notice as possible prior to evacuation; however limited notice may be given due to changing conditions.

#### WHAT YOU SHOULD DO WHEN AN EVACUATION ORDER HAS BEEN DOWNGRADED

Upon notification of an evacuation order downgrade, you should remain prepared for an evacuation by:

- Ensuring that you know the location and preparing to transport all family members or co-workers and designate a Reception Centre outside the evacuation area, should the area brought back under evacuation order.
- Keeping essential items readily available for a quick departure, including medications, eyeglasses, valuable papers (i.e. insurance), immediate care needs for dependants and, if you choose, keepsakes (photographs, etc).
- Ensuring that any disabled persons and/or children are prepared for departure.
- Ensuring that pets and livestock remain in a safe area.
- Ensuring that you have accommodation options for your family, if possible. Reception Centre will be made available again if required.
- Monitoring reliable news sources for evacuation order information. Further information will be issued as it becomes available via the CRD Emergency Operations Facebook page (@CRDEmergencyOperations) and the CRD website [www.cariboord.ca](http://www.cariboord.ca)

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