

July 24, 2017 – 12 p.m.
EOC-17-34
For Immediate Release

Residents permitted to return to area northwest of 100 Mile

Williams Lake, B.C. – The area northwest of 100 Mile House around Tatton Station Road 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 (CRD) website to see the specific area that has been downgraded: <http://bit.ly/2gXQnDQ>

All CRD areas south of Lac La Hache previously on evacuation order are now on evacuation alert.

While residents are able to return to 100 Mile House and surrounding areas, locations north of Lac La Hache, including the City of Williams Lake, remain on evacuation order and security will be in place to enforce the order in those areas.

Residents are returning to an area that was profoundly affected by wildfire and should be aware that there may be danger trees in wildfire affected areas. Home owners and private land owners are recommended to work with an insurance agency to have an assessment done by a qualified arborist on their private property.

Further, 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 also 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. 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 between McLeese Lake and Lac La Hache due to evacuation orders.

Those who were removed from the community via bus will be able to return home via BC Transit from the ESS reception centres in Prince George and Kamloops. Door-to-door bus service will be available 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 open at the South Cariboo Recreation Centre 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily until need subsides. Red Cross services will be available to anyone returning to the area that requires assistance. Contact Red Cross at 1-800-863-6582.

.../More

Since this area remains on evacuation alert, anyone returning 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 TO AN ALERT

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

- Having a plan to transport all family members or co-workers 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 dependents 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

Media Contacts:

Cariboo Regional District, Emergency Operations Centre

Emily Epp, EOC Communications

250-302-9003

eocommunications@cariboord.ca