

PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES: MAJOR PLANNED EVENTS

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**HEALTH PROTECTION BRANCH
MINISTRY OF HEALTH**



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MAKING A PUBLIC HEALTH PLAN FOR MAJOR PLANNED EVENTS

WHAT IS A MAJOR PLANNED EVENT?

A “major planned event” is any planned temporary gathering in B.C. whose nature, expected attendance level, duration and/or location challenges the response capability of a community (local first responders and/or local community). It requires special planning by one or more agencies to minimize the impact on health and safety. A major planned event is also referred to as a “mass gathering.”

WHAT ARE THE PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES: MAJOR PLANNED EVENTS?

The Government of British Columbia (Ministry of Health) in collaboration with stakeholders has developed the *Public Health Guidelines: Major Planned Events* to help event organizers and host communities work together to plan for major events. The document is posted online at <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/keeping-bc-healthy-safe/pses-mpes/major-planned-events>.

The *Public Health Guidelines: Major Planned Events* provide an overall event-planning framework. They offer information on the event organizer’s role in planning for public health concerns and reducing incidents associated with major planned events. In addition, they include details on obtaining necessary approvals from the local health authority.

In 2014, Emergency Management BC (EMBC) produced the *British Columbia Major Planned Events Guidelines*, which can be found at: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-recovery/local-government/majorplannedeventsguidelines.pdf>. The Ministry of Health guidelines (this document) are intended to complement the EMBC guidelines.

WHAT PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH MAJOR PLANNED EVENTS?

As an event organizer, one of your goals is to ensure the event runs smoothly, without any incidents that could affect the health and safety of attendees, participants and the host community. Major planned events are often associated with higher incidences of illnesses and injuries than would normally be associated with similar-sized populations. This is due to large concentrations of people in limited spaces putting stress on even the most basic of public health services (e.g., drinking water and sanitation).

The situation is compounded when the number of people at an event equals or outnumbers the residents in the host community. Such communities are unlikely to have the resources and capacity (e.g., physical infrastructure, and medical, safety and security services) to maintain public health and safety for community members and the people involved with the event – especially if public health incidents occur at the event (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1: POTENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH HAZARDS AND CONSEQUENCES ASSOCIATED WITH MAJOR PLANNED EVENTS

POTENTIAL EVENT HAZARDS	POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES	WITHOUT ADEQUATE HEALTH AND SAFETY RESOURCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather • Inadequate drinking water • Substandard sanitation • Improper food handling • Overcrowding • Unsafe or inadequate physical infrastructure • Unsafe use of alcohol or other drugs • Environmental hazards • Wildlife 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dehydration • Heat- or cold-related illnesses • Gastrointestinal diseases • Communicable diseases • Injuries • Alcohol or other drug-related harms • Violence • Psychological distress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitalization • Disability • Death

HOW DO I TAKE ACTION?

You can reduce the potential for incidents at your event by careful planning as directed by the *Public Health Guidelines: Major Planned Events*. They recommend completing a risk assessment of your event by:

- Identifying potential hazards.
- Estimating the likelihood of occurrence and magnitude of consequence for each hazard (i.e., the risk).
- Developing a plan to reduce risk and handle consequences.

As you complete your risk assessment, keep in mind the ability of your host community's services to respond to any incidents at your event. Please see *The British Columbia Major Planned Events Guidelines* for more information on risk assessment and for a Risk Assessment Form Template. Ensure you contact the appropriate people and departments early in order to gain feedback and approvals.

The *Public Health Guidelines: Major Planned Events* suggest breaking up your planning activities by hazard types identified in your risk assessment (e.g., fire, security incidents, severe weather, electrical incidents and traffic control). Making a public health plan involves planning for the prevention of illnesses and injuries associated with event activities, services and infrastructure. The public health consequences can be broken down into these main categories:

- Heat- or cold-related illnesses: hypothermia and dehydration.
- Gastrointestinal illnesses: foodborne and waterborne illnesses.
- Communicable diseases: influenza and sexually transmitted infections.

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- Injuries (human-caused): drowning, crushing from crowd surges, failing infrastructure, alcohol or other drug-related harms, assault and civil unrest.
- Injuries (non-human-caused): electrical storms, wildfire (both fire and smoke) and earthquakes.

Your public health plan should consider and plan for all the potential public health hazards and risks you identify during your risk assessment. Some of the other plans you complete (e.g., traffic management and liquor control) may feed into your public health plan. You may need only reference these other plans rather than reinvent them, but they should still be considered within your public health planning.

You can organize your public health plan for each hazard by breaking it down into three categories of actions you can take to reduce or eliminate risk:

1. Remove the risk to the extent possible.

Use this category of action for hazards that that you can minimize – mainly the built and natural environment. For example, you must ensure that any water available from a water supply system or food provided/ sold at the event is safe and has been approved by the local health authority. Also, you must ensure the sound produced at your event does not harm people’s ears.

2. Provide information, tools and services to empower the people at your event to take steps to reduce their own harm.

Identify hazards you cannot directly control and develop strategies to communicate the risks and risk-reduction strategies to attendees. This should start before the event by providing information to attendees about potential hazards and ways they can protect themselves, including information about any risk-reduction services that will be available.

This information sharing should continue throughout the event. For example, you can remind people about safe drinking (alcohol) guidelines, including the need for a designated driver, on the event website and during the event. Let them know ahead of time about services available for anyone who drinks too much (e.g., chill-out areas, medical tent and taxi/transit services).

3. Monitor for incidents, both isolated and recurring, during the event and provide timely interventions to reduce impact and reoccurrences.

This category of action will help you discover if there is an ongoing problem that needs fixing. For example: keep an open line of communication between your event communication lead, security, medical services and others during your event, and maintain a running log of incidents. You should investigate patterns of incidents for a potential common cause and manage it to minimize impact and frequency of incident occurrence.

Ideally, your public health plan should be completed well in advance of your event, especially if you will need approvals (e.g., food service permits) from your local health authority. You should engage appropriate professionals and communicate across all agencies to ensure you cover all your bases:

- Public health professionals from the local health authority: medical health officers, public health nurses, environmental health officers, harm reduction co-ordinators and public health engineers.
- Safety personnel: police, fire service and security personnel.
- Engineers and tradespeople: electricians, carpenters and plumbers.
- Local nongovernmental organizations: e.g., volunteers in harm reduction education.
- Local government professionals: public works staff.

RESOURCES

There are a number of sources, including the above-mentioned professionals that you can use to gain more information. Learn from past experiences and other event organizers. Look back at your previous events or talk to someone who has put on an event similar to yours in the community. Were there issues that came up? How did you or your contact deal with them? Use these experiences to inform and strengthen your current plan.

FACT SHEETS ON MAJOR PLANNED EVENTS

This guidance includes fact sheets on some basic public health issues that are often relevant for most events: drinking water, sanitation, waste management and food safety. There is also a fact sheet on harm reduction because major planned events are often associated with unsafe alcohol and other drug use.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The fact sheets will not provide information on all hazards you may need to plan for, such as unsafe infrastructure (e.g., tents, fences and stages), sun safety, personal services (e.g., tattooing and esthetics), crowd control, recreational water (e.g., pools, hot tubs and natural water bodies), and animal and insect control. The following is a list of resources you may wish to consult with for information about other public health hazards you may encounter.

Health Authorities

In British Columbia, the health authorities are responsible for delivering health care and programming, including health-related permits and approvals (e.g., food service licensing). To find out if you need a health-related permit, contact the appropriate health authority:

First Nations Health Authority http://www.fnha.ca/ 1-866-913-0033	Island Health http://www.viha.ca/ 1-877-370-8699	Provincial Health Services Authority www.phsa.ca/ 604-675-7400
Fraser Health http://www.fraserhealth.ca/ 1-877-935-5669	Northern Health https://northernhealth.ca/ 250-565-2649	
Interior Health http://www.interiorhealth.ca/ 250-862-4200	Vancouver Coastal Health http://www.vch.ca/ 1-866-884-0888	

Health Authority Guidance for Major Planned Events

Some health authorities have developed guidance on identifying health risks and safety factors at major planned events. For example:

- *Managing Mass Gatherings* (Interior Health Authority):
https://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourEnvironment/Documents/Mass_Gathering_Handout.pdf
- *Temporary Event Coordinator's Planning Guide* (Vancouver Coastal Health Authority):
https://www.vch.ca/media/Temporary_Event_Coordinators_Planning_Guide_February_2015.pdf

BC Emergency Health Services (BC Ambulance Services)

BC Emergency Health Services offers contracted paramedic services at major public and international events. Under Emergency Management Special Operations, the Planned Events office organizes all contractual ambulance coverage for the province. The purpose of contracted resources is to limit the impact large events have on the regional 911 system, and provide efficient emergency patient care at special events. For more information, see: <http://www.bcehs.ca/our-services/programs-services/special-operations>.

BC Liquor Control and Licensing Branch

The BC Liquor Control and Licensing Branch regulates liquor service in bars and restaurants, private liquor stores, liquor manufacturers and importers, and liquor at catered and special occasion events. Major planned events where alcohol is served are subject to Special Occasion Licensing requirements. For more information, visit the Special Occasions Licence webpage: <http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/lclb/apply/special/index.htm>.

BC Safety Authority

The BC Safety Authority is an independent, self-funded organization mandated to oversee the safe installation and operation of technical systems and equipment (e.g., electrical, elevating and amusement devices). These systems and equipment are regulated under the *Safety Standards Act* and associated regulations. In addition to issuing permits, licences and certificates, the BC Safety Authority works with industry to reduce safety risks through assessment, education and outreach, enforcement and research. For more information, see: <http://www.safetyauthority.ca/>.

WorkSafeBC

WorkSafeBC promotes workplace health and safety for B.C. workers and employers. It consults with and educates employers and workers, and enforces the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation. For more information, see: <http://www.worksafebc.com/default.asp>.

BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC)

The BCCDC provides provincial and national leadership in public health through surveillance, detection, treatment, prevention and consultation services. The BCCDC website provides information about communicable diseases, food, environmental health, sexual health, harm reduction, outbreaks and emergencies, and preventing infection. For more information, see: <http://www.bccdc.ca/>.

HealthLinkBC Files

The HealthLinkBC Files are fact sheets providing information on key health topics such as childhood and adult disease prevention, and environmental health hazards. For a list of files, see: <http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/servicesresources/healthlinkbcfiles/hfileslist.html>.

Personal Service Establishments

A personal service establishment is a business in which a person provides a personal service to or on the body of another person (e.g., an esthetician, tattoo artist or hair stylist). Personal service establishments are regulated under Division 1 of the Regulated Activities Regulation (*Public Health Act*). For more information and provincial guidance, see: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/keeping-bc-healthy-safe/pses>.

Recreational Water Quality (Pools)

Artificially created recreational bodies of water (e.g., pools, hot tubs and spray pools) are regulated under the Pool Regulation (*Public Health Act*). The *B.C. Guidelines for Pool Operations* are designed to help operators and regulators interpret the Pool Regulation. These guidelines represent generally accepted standards of safe

practices. See: http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/air-land-water/pool_operations_guidelines_jan2014_final.pdf.

Recreational Water Quality (Natural Water Bodies)

Health Canada (in conjunction with the provinces/territories) has developed guidance on the factors that can make natural recreational waters hazardous to human health. See *Guidelines for Recreational Water Quality*: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/pubs/water-eau/guide_water-2012-guide_eau/index-eng.php.

REFERENCES

Department of Education, Dublin, Ireland. (1996). *Code of practice for safety at outdoor pop concerts and other outdoor musical events*.

<http://www.dttas.ie/sites/default/files/publications/sport/english/safety-outdoor-pop-concerts-and-other-outdoor-musical-events/safety-outdoor-pop-concerts-and-other-outdoor-musical-events.pdf>

Department of Health, Government of Western Australia. (2009). *Guidelines for concerts, events and organised gatherings*.

<http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/~media/Files/Corporate/general%20documents/Environmental%20health/Concerts%20and%20Mass%20Gathering%20Guidelines.ashx>

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Interior Health Authority. (2008). *Managing Mass Gatherings*.

http://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourEnvironment/Documents/Mass_Gathering_Handout.pdf

Interior Health Authority. (2008). *Mass Gathering Guide for Health Protection Services Staff*.

State Government of Victoria, Australia. (2013). *Code of practice for running safer music festivals and events*.

[http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Code-of-practice-for-running-safer-music-festivals-and-events-\(2013\)](http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Code-of-practice-for-running-safer-music-festivals-and-events-(2013))

FACT SHEET #1: DRINKING WATER

BACKGROUND

This fact sheet provides guidance for event organizers on providing drinking water to reduce the risk of dehydration and heat-related illness, and minimize the risk of waterborne illnesses.

Clean drinking water is essential for human life. We constantly lose water through bodily processes such as urination and sweating. If we do not replenish that lost water, we are at risk for serious conditions (e.g., dehydration and heat exhaustion) that can lead to hospitalization or even death. Unfortunately, these conditions are commonly associated with major planned events because people do not always drink enough water when engaging in activities and/or experiencing circumstances, such as:

- Hot weather during outdoor events.
- Confined spaces.
- Crowding.
- Aerobic activities (e.g., sports and dancing).
- Alcohol and other drug use.

REDUCE THE RISK

Event organizers can reduce the risk of dehydration and heat-related illnesses by increasing access to potable¹ water with one or a combination of the following options:

- Provide free and easily accessible drinking water during events, particularly at all-day and multi-day events, and encourage attendees to bring refillable water containers/bottles.
- Allow attendees to bring their own water into events (event organizers could require the water to be in factory-sealed plastic bottles upon admission).
- Sell bottled water at prices that reflect cost recovery rather than making a profit, to make it an accessible option for all attendees.

As well as being easily accessible at major planned events, drinking water should be safe. If drinking water is being provided by a water supply system (e.g., local municipal supply, vehicle water tanks and tank trucks), the water supply system will be subject to the *Drinking Water Protection Act* and Drinking Water Protection Regulation.

Drinking water sources and equipment used for delivery can easily become contaminated with human and animal feces containing disease-causing pathogens and other contaminants.² Drinking water supply systems must be designed, installed, operated and maintained to ensure water potability, and approved by the local health authority. This includes carrying out the following actions:

- Contact the local health authority to determine if your plan includes a water supply system, and if you need a construction permit and operating permit.³

¹ Section 1 of the *Drinking Water Protection Act* defines “potable water” as water provided by a domestic water system that meets the standards prescribed by regulation. It is safe to drink and fit for domestic purposes without further treatment.

² See HealthLinkBC’s files related to waterborne illnesses for more information:
<http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/hfile49a.stm>

³ These must be issued before the event, so event organizers should make this connection early in their planning.

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- Obtain a water licence if you plan to use a new water source (i.e., surface water or aquifer) for which you do not already have a water licence. Contact the local office of the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources Operations to find out if this is necessary.⁴ For contact information, see: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/contacts.html>.
- Provide an adequate supply of drinking water and water to support food vendor requirements. This should be determined during the risk assessment, considering the event type, duration and location, and ambient temperature. An event that is considered to be at high risk for dehydration incidents may need to provide enough drinking water for 500 mL/person/hour or up to 5 L/day.
- Provide an appropriate number of drinking water stations and outlets. This should be determined through the risk assessment. It could range from one outlet for every 500 individuals for a high-risk event to one outlet for every 3,000 individuals for a low-risk event. Outlets should be clearly marked and well lit, and located in areas that are easily accessible.
- Provide an appropriate number of outlets/connections for vendors and caterers.
- Provide adequate water pressure for normal and peak use.
- Provide clean, well maintained and suitable water-dispensing equipment.
- Install backflow-prevention devices at all available water connections.
- Ensure adequate drainage by providing self-closing taps.
- Make sure the ground surrounding the outlets has a nonslip surface and adequate drainage.
- Secure all equipment (e.g., supply lines and holding tanks) in order to:
 - Prevent access by unauthorized people.
 - Prevent accidental or deliberate equipment damage.
 - Prevent water contamination.

PROVIDE INFORMATION

- Use signage, announcements and other kinds of communication to encourage people to drink water.
- Provide people with information about the signs and symptoms of dehydration, as well as heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion. This should include advice about steps a person should take if experiencing symptoms of dehydration and heat-related illnesses.
- See the following HealthLinkBC Files for more information, including information about the signs and symptoms:
 - *Dehydration*: <http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthtopics/content.asp?hwid=dehyd>
 - *Heat-related Illness*: <http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/hfile35.stm>.

MONITOR HEALTH RISKS

- Ensure the water is potable, which means it is safe to drink and fit for domestic purposes without further treatment. The person(s) responsible for the water supply system will be required to sample and test (at a laboratory) the bacteriological safety of the water.
- Keep open communication with first aid and onsite medical staff with regard to incidents of dehydration or heat-related illnesses, as well as gastrointestinal illnesses.

⁴ This must be issued before water can be drawn from the source.

CHECKLIST

Each event is unique, with different requirements. Checklist items may or may not be applicable to your event.

TO DO:

- Contact the local health authority (construction and operating permits).
- Obtain a water licence, if necessary.
- Determine the amount of water needed per person.
- Determine the number of outlets and locations needed for attendees.
- Determine the number of outlets needed for vendors and caterers.
- Arrange water-hauling service contract, if necessary.
- Provide adequate lighting in areas around outlets.
- Sample and test water for bacteriological quality as required by the health authority.
- Ensure all equipment is appropriate for use and secure it.
- Check equipment and outlets regularly during the event to ensure they are working.
- Check outlets, drainage basins and surrounding areas regularly during the event to ensure they are clean and the ground is dry.
- Provide information to attendees about the signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses, and make plans for encouraging people to drink water.

(For solid waste disposal, please see Fact Sheet #4: *Solid and Liquid Waste Disposal*.)

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S HEALTH AUTHORITIES

First Nations Health Authority
<http://www.fnha.ca/>
1-866-913-0033

Fraser Health
<http://www.fraserhealth.ca/>
1-877-935-5669

Interior Health
<http://www.interiorhealth.ca/>
250-862-4200

Island Health
<http://www.viha.ca/>
1-877-370-8699

Northern Health
<https://northernhealth.ca/>
250-565-2649

Vancouver Coastal Health
<http://www.vch.ca/>
1-866-884-0888

Provincial Health Services Authority
www.phsa.ca/
604-675-7400

LEGISLATION

Drinking Water Protection Act

http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/00_01009_01

Drinking Water Protection Regulation

http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/200_2003

Water Sustainability Act

<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/watersustainabilityact/act/>

RESOURCES

HealthLinkBC. (2014). *Dehydration*.

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<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/air-land-water/small-water-system-guidebook.pdf>

Province of British Columbia. (N.D.). *Water Licences and Approvals*.

http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/water_rights/licence_application/

FACT SHEET #2: SAFE FOOD

BACKGROUND

This fact sheet provides event co-ordinators and vendors with the information they need to reduce risks related to foodborne illnesses at major planned events. Food vendors are responsible for ensuring foods for human consumption do not cause foodborne illnesses.

Foodborne illness is a disease caused by consuming contaminated food. A contaminant (also called a “hazard”) falls into three categories:

- Biological: disease-causing micro-organisms (germs), such as viruses, bacteria, and parasites.
- Chemical: substances such as pesticides and cleaning agents.
- Physical: objects such as glass, metal or bone fragments.

The most common symptoms associated with foodborne illnesses include stomach cramps, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and fever. Serious cases of foodborne illnesses can lead to hospitalization or even death, especially for high-risk individuals (e.g., pregnant women, children, the elderly or people with weakened immune systems).

Visit <http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthtopics/content.asp?hwid=te4626> for more information on foodborne illness and safe food handling.

Food vendors are regulated under the Food Premises Regulation (*Public Health Act*), and require approvals from the local health authority. Vendors have a legal duty to:

- Ensure they operate in compliance with all legislative requirements.⁵
- Ensure foods produced in their facilities are safe for human consumption.

REDUCE THE RISK

Temporary facilities at major events may have less than ideal infrastructures (e.g., refrigeration, cooking equipment, work surfaces, washing/toileting facilities), which can present food safety challenges that vendors must address. In addition, warm weather may contribute to creating food environments that promote bacterial growth and the survival of other harmful organisms in foods.

The health authorities administer the Food Premises Regulation. This regulation outlines the regulatory requirements for businesses supplying and serving food to the public. The health authorities are responsible for approving, licensing and inspecting food facilities and responding to complaints related to foodborne illnesses. Event organizers should ensure food vendors contact their local health authority well in advance of an event to obtain a permit that will authorize them to legally supply food to the public.

FOOD HANDLING PROCEDURES

Contaminated foods can appear, smell and taste normal. Therefore, it is very important that food be handled in accordance with Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) steps to safeguard against biological, chemical and physical contaminants.

⁵ Food Premises Regulation, Section 14(1) and the *Food Safety Act* Section 2:
http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/11_210_99

The Food Premises Regulation requires vendors to develop, maintain and follow written food-handling procedures that include all HACCP steps. To learn more, see *Writing Your Own Food Safety Plan – The HACCP Way*:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/EH/FPS/Food/EnsuringFoodSafetyHACCPWay.pdf>.

FOODSAFE

The Food Premises Regulation (section 10) states that operators of a food service establishment must hold a FOODSAFE certificate or its equivalent. When the operator is absent from the establishment, at least one employee present in the establishment must hold a FOODSAFE certificate. FOODSAFE courses are available face to face, online and by correspondence. They are recognized throughout B.C. and across Canada as meeting the requirements for food safety training for food service industry workers. See the FOODSAFE website: <http://www.foodsafe.ca/>.

MARKETSAFE

If there is a market component to the event, the vendor is encouraged to take the MarketSafe training program. MarketSafe is a food safety training program for farmers and producers who make or grow products to sell at farmers' markets or other types of temporary markets. See: <http://www.foodsafe.ca/marketsafe>.

PROVIDE INFORMATION

- Provide signs that encourage attendees to wash their hands before eating.
- Give attendees information about foodborne illnesses, including the signs and symptoms.
- Encourage attendees to seek first aid/medical attention if experiencing these signs and symptoms.

MONITOR HEALTH RISKS

Health authority representatives should have access to inspect vendors' facilities before and during a major planned event. Event organizers should ensure environmental health officers from the health authority have this access and that vendors are compliant. Organizers should not allow food vendors without a permit to supply food to the public.

CHECKLIST

Each event is unique, with different requirements. Checklist items may not be applicable to your event.

TO DO:

- Contact the local health authority (licensing).
- Check that all food premises/vendors have a:
 - FOODSAFE Certificate
 - Food Safety Plan and Sanitation Plan⁶

⁶ See: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/keeping-bc-healthy-safe/food-safety/food-safety-sanitation-plans>

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S HEALTH AUTHORITIES

First Nations Health Authority
<http://www.fnha.ca/>
1-866-913-0033

Island Health
<http://www.viha.ca/>
1-877-370-8699

Provincial Health Services Authority
www.phsa.ca/
604-675-7400

Fraser Health
<http://www.fraserhealth.ca/>
1-877-935-5669

Northern Health
<https://northernhealth.ca/>
250-565-2649

Interior Health
<http://www.interiorhealth.ca/>
250-862-4200

Vancouver Coastal Health
<http://www.vch.ca/>
1-866-884-0888

LEGISLATION

Food Safety Act: http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/02028_01

Public Health Act / Food Premises Regulation: http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/11_210_99

Public Health Act / Health Hazards Regulation: http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/216_2011

RESOURCES

BC Centre for Disease Control. *Ensuring Food Safety: Writing Your Own Food Safety Plan – The HACCP Way*.
<http://www.bccdc.ca/NR/rdonlyres/1A068D5D-3350-4D1C-A356-D8C6D62B7DB9/0/EnsuringFoodSafetyHACCPWay.pdf>

BC Centre for Disease Control. Food Guidelines and Information.
<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/food-your-health/food-safety/food-premises-guidelines>

BC Centre for Disease Control. *Guideline for the Sale of Foods at Temporary Food Markets*.
http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/EH/FPS/Food/Guidelines%20-%20Sale%20of%20Foods%20at%20Temporary%20Food%20Markets_current.pdf

FOODSAFE. Food Safety Courses.
<http://www.foodsafe.ca/>

Health Authorities

- Fraser Health. Operating a Food Business
<http://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-info/health-topics/food-safety/food-business/>
- Interior Health. Health Approval & Permits: Requirements to operate a food service establishment.
<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourEnvironment/FoodSafety/Pages/Permits.aspx>
- Island Health. Food Safety
<http://www.viha.ca/mho/food/>
- Northern Health. Temporary Food Permits and Markets
<https://northernhealth.ca/YourHealth/EnvironmentalHealth/FoodSafety/TemporaryFoodPermitsandMarkets.aspx>

PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES: MAJOR PLANNED EVENTS

- Vancouver Coastal Health. Permits: Regulatory requirements to offer food services.
<http://www.vch.ca/your-environment/food-safety/permits/>

HealthLinkBC. Fact Sheets on Foodborne and Waterborne Disease.

<http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthtopics/content.asp?hwid=te4626>

Province of British Columbia. Food Safety and Security.

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/keeping-bc-healthy-safe/food-safety>

Province of British Columbia. Food Safety Courses.

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/keeping-bc-healthy-safe/food-safety/food-safety-courses>

Public Health Agency. Estimates of Food-borne Illness in Canada.

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/efwd-emoaha/efbi-emoa-eng.php>

FACT SHEET #3: SANITATION

BACKGROUND

This fact sheet provides guidance on providing good sanitation to reduce the risk of disease outbreaks. Sanitation generally refers to facilities and services that allow for the safe disposal of human waste. Inadequate sanitation is a major cause of disease worldwide. Improving it has a significant beneficial impact on health.

Providing safe, clean and hygienic sanitary facilities with hand-washing stations is one of the primary responsibilities of event organizers.⁷ Considering the number of toilets and hand-washing stations that should be available, their location, access and maintenance will not only help prevent disease outbreaks, but will also ensure attendees have a pleasant experience.

REDUCE THE RISK

Event organizers can reduce the risk of illness by considering the following factors when determining the number of toilets, sinks and showers (see Tables 1, 2 and 3, below, for more details):

- Event duration.
- Audience profile.
- Anticipated audience food and fluid consumption.
- Anticipated use during intervals and breaks in performance.
- Requirements for event-related temporary campsites.
- Provision of facilities for children or elderly people who may take longer to use a facility.
- Weather conditions and temperature.
- Provision of facilities for people with special needs (e.g., wheelchair accessibility). One toilet with hand-washing facilities should be provided per 75 people with special needs.
- For campgrounds:
 - Consider supplying shower facilities onsite when overnight camping is provided.
 - Use the suggested minimum number of shower facilities in Table 3.
 - Locate campgrounds in locations with adequate drainage.

Use the following recommendations when determining sanitation requirements. A consultant or contractor could provide assistance in determining the appropriate numbers of sanitary conveniences.

- Locate toilets, sinks and showers so they:
 - Provide protection from bad weather and tripping hazards.
 - Are on ground that is dry and likely to remain so.
 - Are distributed around the venue (to minimize crowding and queuing problems).
 - Do not obstruct emergency routes.
 - Are visible.
 - Are easily accessible to attendees and, if necessary, service vehicles.
- Ensure toilet blocks and individual units are adequately lit during the day and night.
- Provide stable, nonslip surfaces for toilet block floors, ramps and steps.

⁷ Division 2 of the Regulated Activities Regulation requires an operator of a public place meant for assembly or recreation to ensure the public has access to adequate sanitary facilities.

PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES: MAJOR PLANNED EVENTS

- Protect connected pipe work to avoid damage.
- Screen urinal areas with a strong screen and enclose the area with appropriate security fencing.
- Provide baby-changing facilities, including receptacles for hygienic diaper disposal.
- Designate responsibility for routine cleaning by doing the following:
 - Develop maintenance and cleaning schedules.
 - Clean toilets throughout the duration of the event.
 - Provide an adequate supply of toilet paper, soap, paper towels and/or hand sanitizer or antiseptic hand wipes.
 - Provide for disposal and removal of sanitary napkins.
 - Provide adequate cleaning supplies for staff.
 - Ensure availability of equipment and trained staff for emergency repairs and rapid clearance of blockages.

TABLE 1. RECOMMENDED NUMBER OF TOILET FACILITIES FOR EVENTS WHERE ALCOHOL IS NOT AVAILABLE

Patrons	Males			Females	
	Toilets	Urinals	Sinks	Toilets	Sinks
<500	1	2	2	6	2
<1,000	2	4	4	9	4
<2,000	4	8	6	12	6
<3,000	6	15	10	18	10
<5,000	8	25	17	30	17

TABLE 2. RECOMMENDED NUMBER OF TOILET FACILITIES FOR EVENTS WHERE ALCOHOL IS AVAILABLE

Patrons	Males			Females	
	Toilets	Urinals	Sinks	Toilets	Sinks
<500	3	8	2	13	2
<1,000	5	10	4	16	4
<2,000	9	15	7	18	7
<3,000	10	20	14	22	14
<5,000	12	30	20	40	20

TABLE 3. RECOMMENDED MINIMUM NUMBER OF SHOWER FACILITIES*

Gender	Toilets	Urinals	Sinks	Showers
Males	1 per 50	1 per 100	1 per 75	1 per 100
Females	1 per 25	N/A	1 per 75	1 per 100

*Based on two to three nights of camping.

PROVIDE INFORMATION

- Provide clear signage on toilets and showers.
- Provide hand-washing signs.
- Provide clear directional signs on where toilets and showers are located.
- Provide prominent signs in baby-changing cubicles to ensure waste receptacles are used.

MONITOR HEALTH RISKS

- Ensure facilities are clean, sanitized and maintained throughout the event.
- Keep open communication with first aid and onsite medical staff with respect to such issues as gastrointestinal illnesses.

CHECKLIST

Each event is unique, with different requirements. Checklist items may or may not be applicable to your event.

TO DO:

Ensure your sanitary facilities are:

- Provided in sufficient number.
- Located away from food storage and food service areas.
- Well lit, including the surrounding area.
- Well marked.
- Secured to prevent tipping.
- Easily accessible to service vehicles.
- Provided with waste receptacles for sanitary products and paper.
- Equipped with soap and hand-drying equipment.
- Fitted with syringe disposal units.
- Cleaned regularly and restocked throughout the event.
- Odour free.

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S HEALTH AUTHORITIES

First Nations Health Authority

<http://www.fnha.ca/>

1-866-913-0033

Fraser Health

<http://www.fraserhealth.ca/>

1-877-935-5669

Interior Health

<http://www.interiorhealth.ca/>

250-862-4200

Island Health

<http://www.viha.ca/>

1-877-370-8699

Northern Health

<https://northernhealth.ca/>

250-565-2649

Vancouver Coastal Health

<http://www.vch.ca/>

1-866-884-0888

Provincial Health Services Authority

www.phsa.ca/

604-675-7400

LEGISLATION

Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, 4.85 Washroom facilities.

<http://www2.worksafebc.com/Publications/OHSRegulation/GuidelinePart4.asp?reportID=22356>

Regulated Activities Regulation, Division 2 – Public Sanitary Facilities and Toilets.

http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/161_2011

FACT SHEET #4: SOLID AND LIQUID WASTE MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

This fact sheet can help event organizers manage solid and liquid waste to reduce the risk of injuries and illness. Large quantities of waste will be generated by concessionaires and attendees at most major planned events. Waste should be managed carefully to minimize the risks associated with its accumulation, collection and disposal. Examples of waste include:

- Paper and cardboard packaging.
- Food and drink containers.
- Food debris.
- Waste food from food concessions.
- Glass, plastic and metal cans.
- Clothing.
- Human waste.
- Medical waste such as needles and bandages.
- Remains of camp fires, fireworks and pyrotechnics.
- Waste from toilets, showers and hand-washing basins.
- Wastewater from concessions.

Hazards posed by waste include:

- Worker injury during collection and/or removal of waste from the site.
- Waste accumulation, blocking emergency access routes, hampering movement around the site and creating tripping hazards.
- Fire hazards when waste is accidentally or purposely ignited.
- Misuse of waste by the audience (e.g., throwing bottles).
- Vehicle movements associated with collecting waste.
- Wildlife, insects and vermin.
- Transmission of disease-causing organisms through contact with waste (e.g., feces).
- Improper waste disposal of waste.
- Pollution (e.g., fish waterways).
- Environmental issues.

REDUCE THE RISK

Event organizers can reduce the risk of injuries and illness by taking the following actions:

- Consider the audience size, area size, site boundaries, food concessions and other relevant factors when planning working methods and determining the number of workers, sanitary facilities, and garbage receptacles required for waste management.
- Consider the type, size and location of garbage receptacles. Wheeled containers are the most versatile: they come in a variety of sizes (with lids), and can be easily manoeuvred and positioned.
- Consider providing tamper-proof sharps bins so attendees can safely dispose of used needles.
- See Fact Sheet #5: *Harm Reduction* for resources on the distribution and disposal of needles.
- Provide adequate bins in locations to ensure there is no build-up of combustible materials.

PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES: MAJOR PLANNED EVENTS

- Make sure garbage does not pose a fire safety risk by blocking or being stored in such a manner as to provide an ignition source.
- Secure positioning bins and empty them regularly – at least daily – for the duration of the event.
- Provide recycling facilities.
- Encourage separating waste into individual disposal units for dry, wet and hazardous waste.
- Discuss waste removal methods with the waste contractor and ultimate disposal location.
- Make sure the sites chosen for bulk collection have a suitable access route. There may be event areas that are subject to a ban on vehicle movements to protect the audience.
- Check with local governments for any bylaws on solid waste handling. Local governments may specify practices for recycling and composting.
- Manage workers and equipment to ensure there are adequate resources for the appropriate areas at the appropriate times. Each area of the venue may have to be managed differently.
- Arrange venue cleaning – before, during and after the event.
- Provide a large-enough team of people to clean up after the event.
- Food Waste:
 - Use solid waste containers with lids that are secure, leak-proof, and prevent wildlife and pests.
 - Organize separate waste collection for food premises.
 - Continually monitor waste collection to ensure it is done often enough.
 - Ensure food waste is put in covered containers placed strategically around the venue. Covers are essential, especially in outdoor settings or if high temperatures are expected.
- Empty containers:
 - Arrange for the storage or disposal of empty containers, such as cardboard boxes.
- Hazardous waste:
 - Arrange for the collection and disposal of various forms of hazardous waste, including waste from food preparation areas, medical sharps and other hazardous materials.
- Medical waste:
 - Ensure there is provision for the storage, collection and disposal of medical waste from onsite medical and first aid facilities.
- Sewage and greywater:
 - Provide and maintain adequate facilities for storing and disposing of sewage and greywater (waste from sinks, showers or baths). Information on small wastewater tanks servicing portable or temporary food units can be found in the *Provincial Food Safety Guideline for Mobile Food Vending Carts*, available through your local health authority.
- Apply for a permit from the health authority’s public health inspector when holding tanks are used. A permit is a requirement under the *Sewerage System Regulation*.
 - Sewage disposal is regulated by the Sewerage System Regulation for flows less than 22,700 litres/day. The Municipal Wastewater Regulation governs discharges of 22,700 litres/day and more.⁸
 - Provide a copy of the pump-out contract to the health authority’s public health inspector when portable toilets are used. Permanent, in-ground sewage disposal installations may be created for large, annual events.
 - An “Authorized Person,” pursuant to the Sewerage System Regulation must file a Record of Sewerage Disposal System with the local health authority.
 - For discharges falling under the Municipal Wastewater Regulation, you must notify the Ministry of Environment.

⁸ See HealthLinkBC’s file, *Maintenance and Operation of Sewerage Disposal Systems*: <http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/hfile21.stm>

PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES: MAJOR PLANNED EVENTS

- Adhere to Ministry of Environment standards if composting waste. The disposal and use of composted material must be done in a manner that will not result in a health hazard.
- Recycling
 - Consider providing containers for recyclable materials.
 - Encourage vendors to use recyclable food packaging.
 - Place a sufficient number of dedicated containers near the vendor area to encourage recycling.

PROVIDE INFORMATION

- Provide clear signage indicating where waste receptacles are and what types of waste are collected there.
- Use signage, announcements and other methods of communication to encourage people to dispose of waste and/or recycle appropriately.

MONITOR HEALTH RISKS

- Monitor for the presence of animals, birds, rodents and other pest activity related to waste materials.
- Keep open communication with first aid/onsite medical staff with regard to gastrointestinal illnesses.

CHECKLIST

Each event is unique, with different requirements. Checklist items may or may not be applicable to your event.

TO DO:

- Consider the audience size, area size, site boundaries, number of campers and food concessions in planning the number of workers and waste receptacles required for the event.
- Contact local governments regarding any bylaws governing handling, storage and disposal of solid waste.
- Provide bins in:
 - approaches to the event
 - entrances and exits
 - arenas and stages
 - first aid areas
 - catering areas
 - camping areas
- Secure bins to prevent tipping.
- Arrange for bins to be emptied frequently.
- Arrange for the collection and disposal of hazardous waste.
- Ensure bins are easily accessible to service vehicles.
- Provide facilities for the storage and disposal of sewage.
- Ensure service contracts for refuse collection and sewage collection are in place.

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S HEALTH AUTHORITIES

First Nations Health Authority
<http://www.fnha.ca/>
1-866-913-0033

Fraser Health
<http://www.fraserhealth.ca/>
1-877-935-5669

Interior Health
<http://www.interiorhealth.ca/>
250-862-4200

Island Health
<http://www.viha.ca/>
1-877-370-8699

Northern Health
<https://northernhealth.ca/>
250-565-2649

Vancouver Coastal Health
<http://www.vch.ca/>
1-866-884-0888

Provincial Health Services Authority
www.phsa.ca/
604-675-7400

LEGISLATION

Food Premises Regulation
http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/11_210_99

Municipal Wastewater Regulation
http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/87_2012

Organic Matter Recycling Regulation
http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/15_18_2002a

Sewerage System Regulation
http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/22_326_2004

RESOURCES

WildSafeBC
<https://wildsafebc.com>

FACT SHEET #5: HARM REDUCTION

BACKGROUND

Is your event a multi-day music festival? A sports event where alcohol will be served? Many planned events involve challenges with respect to alcohol and other drug use. It is important for event organizers and local authorities to have a sense of what to anticipate, and how they can play a key role in preventing or reducing harm for people attending the event.

The term “harm reduction” refers to a pragmatic, humane approach that focuses on minimizing death, disease and injury associated with higher risk behaviour, while recognizing that the behaviour may continue despite the risks. Harm reduction is an effective public health approach to issues concerning psychoactive substance use, including the use of alcohol and other drugs. Effective design and delivery of harm reduction programs require the input and inclusion of peers (i.e., people who have been part of the population or community, with knowledge gained from lived experience).

Things to consider when planning an event include the number and demographics of event attendees (e.g., age and subculture), potential for overcrowding, planned activities and noise levels, the extent to which alcohol or other drugs may be present, and how these issues may impact the risk of violence and other harms.

ALCOHOL

Alcohol intoxication is a major contributor to violence and injury. Event organizers can help prevent violence and injury at events by managing the availability of alcohol and strategically designing environments where alcohol is served.⁹

If you want to serve alcohol in a public place or sell alcohol in any unlicensed location, you will need to obtain either a private or public Special Occasion License.¹⁰ The local liquor inspector will work directly with the event organizer, and often with the local police, to ensure all vendors and premises are appropriately licensed and trained.

OTHER DRUGS

Major planned events, particularly some kinds of music festivals, may involve the use of pharmaceutical drugs and/or “street” or “party” drugs, the latter of which are not subject to government controls for safe manufacture, storage and distribution. The types of drugs at an event can vary widely. In addition, there are diverse risks associated with different drugs or combinations of drugs.

⁹ World Health Organization. (2009). *Preventing violence by reducing the availability and harmful use of alcohol*: http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/alcohol.pdf

¹⁰ Special Occasion Licence: <http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/lclb/apply/special/index.htm>

Note: Special Occasion Licences are available through BC Liquor Stores and online: <https://solo.bcldb.com/>

ALCOHOL- OR OTHER DRUG-FACILITATED SEXUAL ASSAULT

An alcohol or other drug-facilitated sexual assault is a nonconsensual sexual act in which the survivor¹¹ of the assault is incapacitated, unconscious or unable to consent due to the effects of psychoactive substances (e.g., alcohol, pharmaceutical and/or street or “party” drugs). This includes both cases where the survivor has used alcohol or other drugs voluntarily and cases where a survivor has been given a substance without their consent. Alcohol is the drug most commonly used in this kind of sexual assault, sometimes in combination with other substances.

Common settings for this crime are the survivor or assailant’s home and social situations similar to many major planned events, such as clubs or bars, where people are consuming alcohol and/or other drugs.¹² The survivor usually knows the assailant(s) as a friend or acquaintance, including recent or lesser known acquaintances.¹³

It is difficult to know how often these assaults occur, partly because survivors often do not report sexual assaults. In addition, some substances thought to be used in drug-facilitated sexual assaults are difficult to detect in medical tests after the fact, making it difficult to verify substances used in alcohol or other drug-facilitated sexual assaults.

REDUCE THE RISK

DESIGNING THE EVENT’S PHYSICAL SPACES

A thoughtful design and layout can make a big difference in the degree of safety. Consider what your event attendees might need and where those things should be placed in relation to each other:

- Provide easily accessible, free drinking water.
- Create areas where people can safely and comfortably sit.
- Provide quiet areas for attendees to cool down and relax away from noise and crowds (sometimes called “chill out” areas or “sanctuaries”).
- Provide properly lit outdoor areas.
- Avoid crowding by ensuring clear access to washrooms and exits.
- Create space(s) where alcohol is not served or consumed, and promote these areas with signs.
- Use signs to direct people to areas where they can get help or health information, such as first aid, harm reduction information and drug checking. Medical services should be clearly marked.
- If possible, visibly mark areas where injury or accident may be more likely to occur, such as steep hills, embankments or areas with loose gravel.

¹¹ Some people who have experienced sexual assault identify as survivors and some identify as victims; other terms are also sometimes preferred. Someone who has been through this experience should be given space to self-identify in the way that they find most helpful. This document mainly uses “survivor,” except where the word “victim” appears in the names of services or programs, but either term may be preferable in different contexts.

¹² Olszewski, D. (2009). Sexual assaults facilitated by drugs or alcohol. *Drugs: education, prevention and policy*. 16(1): 39-52. Page 45.

¹³ Ibid.

TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM THE EVENT

- Ensure people have a safe way to get to and from the event, such as public transit, taxi and designated driver services. Transportation may be particularly important if you anticipate that event attendees will be drinking alcohol and/or using other drugs.

ALCOHOL AVAILABILITY

Responsible alcohol policies can prevent many potential problems at events, including violence, sexual assault and overdose. If there will be alcohol at the event, consider ways to make alcohol less of a focus at the event:

- Offer low-alcohol drinks.
- Limit the number of alcoholic drinks that can be bought at one time.
- Provide food and a variety of appealing nonalcoholic beverages that cost less than alcoholic drinks.
- Provide fun alternatives to drinking.
- Limit the overall supply of alcohol at the event based on estimated number of attendees.
- Offer drinking water separately from alcohol so attendees do not need to wait in the alcohol lineup to get water.

ONSITE HARM REDUCTION FOR ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

A pragmatic, nonstigmatizing attitude towards people who use alcohol and other drugs is a good first step in engaging people who may be vulnerable to drug-related harm. If you anticipate some demand among attendees for information about safer alcohol and other drug use, the local health authority can help identify local harm reduction organizations that may be able to provide education, peer engagement, and other drug-related support services.

For more information about harm reduction, see the list of suggestions at the end of this document or contact your health authority.

Other actions to take include the following:

- Ensure staff serving alcohol and the Special Occasion Licence holder have *Serving it Right* certificates.¹⁴
- Display information about Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines in areas where alcohol is served.^{15, 16}
- Display information about the risks of drinking during pregnancy.¹⁷
- Consider serving all beverages in unbreakable cups.
- Provide information about the adverse effects of mixing alcohol with other psychoactive substances, including caffeine.¹⁸
- Reach out to a local harm reduction group that provides onsite harm reduction education, peer support, harm reduction supplies, and drug/sharps disposal services (see the list at the end of this document).

¹⁴ This requirement may not apply at family events. See the *Serving it Right* website: <http://www.servingitright.com/>

¹⁵ See page 2 of *Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines* (brochure): <http://ccsa.ca/Resource%20Library/2012-Canada-Low-Risk-Alcohol-Drinking-Guidelines-Brochure-en.pdf> (If you get a sign-in box, click CANCEL and the website will open.)

¹⁶ Information poster about alcohol in B.C.: <http://www.uvic.ca/research/centres/carbc/assets/docs/infographic-the-ins-and-outs.pdf>

¹⁷ For example: <http://www.bcldb.com/corporate-social-responsibility/responsible-use/fasd-awareness>

¹⁸ *Alcohol and Caffeine: A Bad Buzz*: <http://www.ccsa.ca/Resource%20Library/CCSA-Alcohol-and-Caffeine-Fact-Sheet-Youth-2012-en.pdf> (If you get a sign-in box, click CANCEL and the website will open.)

PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES: MAJOR PLANNED EVENTS

- Consider training/education for event staff (e.g., ticketing, security, first aid and servers) about safer drug use, as well as overdose prevention, recognition and response.¹⁹
- Ask your health authority to provide medical waste (e.g., needle and syringe) disposal services for the event. You may also wish to consult the *Solid and Liquid Waste Management Fact Sheet*, also part of the *Public Health Guidelines: Major Planned Events*.
- Ensure that your event medical team has naloxone for reversing opioid overdoses.²⁰

DRUG CHECKING

Pill- and powder-checking services are harm reduction interventions that help people make more informed choices about substance use. Currently, the most commonly available method of drug checking is the use of reagent tests (e.g., Marquis and Mecke), which give information about the presence or absence of a limited number of chemical compounds. Reagent tests are not available for all substances that may be found in illegal drugs, and only give information about the specific substance tested for.

Organized testing services support consumer safety and align with the public health mandate to identify public hazards. They can also contribute to early warning systems by providing information not available from any other source to health and enforcement officials on illegal drug markets and their associated risks.

COLLABORATING WITH AUTHORITIES

- In planning and holding your event, collaborate with local health authorities and community anti-violence agencies.
- Contact law enforcement and security agencies that will be involved in the event. Seek their support to facilitate non-enforcement-based approaches to reducing alcohol and other drug harm at the event.
- Work with first responder staff to review event protocols and event entry-and-exit access.

PREVENTING ALCOHOL- OR OTHER DRUG-FACILITATED SEXUAL ASSAULT

Sexual violence is preventable, and event organizers have a major role to play in setting a tone of respect and inclusion at events. It is important to keep in mind that stereotyping and survivor blaming is a major factor discouraging survivors from reporting and seeking help after a sexual assault.

Education campaigns directed at female attendees imply that they are solely responsible for preventing sexual assault. Such campaigns also reinforce the idea that survivors are to blame for sexual assault and that only females are sexually assaulted. It is more appropriate to direct educational materials at all event attendees and engage everyone in sexual assault prevention. Actions to take include the following:

- Work with and partner with an organization that provides education and support around sexual violence issues (e.g., a local victim-service or violence-against-women program).²¹

¹⁹ *Overdose Survival Guide*:

http://towardtheheart.com/assets/uploads/files/OD_Survival_Guide_Tips_to_Save_a_Life_2012.08.29_upright_for_website.pdf

²⁰ Opioids are a class of drug or medication that includes morphine, heroin, methadone, fentanyl and oxycodone. They are most often prescribed for pain relief. Opioid drug overdose happens when a person takes more opioids than their body can handle. They lose control over their breathing and may lose consciousness. A lack of oxygen can lead to brain damage, cardiac arrest and death. For information on treating opioid overdose, see the HealthLinkBC file, *Treating Opioid Overdose: B.C.'s Take Home Naloxone Program*: <http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/hfile118.stm> and General Information about the Take Home Naloxone Program: <http://towardtheheart.com/naloxone/>

- Provide education for event attendees about the law surrounding consent for sexual activity, such as age of consent, intoxication and consent, and verbal and nonverbal communication.²²
- Provide information about where survivors of sexual violence can get support (e.g., reference VictimLinkBC²³ in educational materials).
- Promote a culture of awareness and open communication with respect to consent for sexual activity. Peer support can help.
- Inform attendees about the connection between heavy drinking and the risk of becoming a perpetrator or victim of sexual assault.
- Remind all attendees about the risk inherent in accepting drinks or other psychoactive substances from another person, whether they know that person or not.
- Remind attendees to check on friends regularly during and after the event.
- Consider implementing a buddy system: designated volunteers are made available at different locations to intervene and/or provide support if someone is receiving unwanted (i.e., nonconsensual) sexual attention.
- Consider alerting and collaborating with local victim-service providers. They can provide support to those impacted by crime or violence (including sexual violence). In addition, they may be able to provide training on sexualized violence/assault and response as part of the staff's event orientation.

EVENT MEDICAL TEAM/EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

- Your medical team should have first aid training at a minimum. At least one person trained in first aid should be on site throughout the event – preferably with experience in responding to medical issues related to alcohol and other drugs.²⁴
- Effective responses to sexual assault include providing compassionate, nonjudgmental and trauma-informed care to survivors through the medical team, as well as referral to hospital, sexual assault support services (e.g., community-based victim services) and police if desired.²⁵
- Staff should be informed about post-assault protocols, the risk of sexually transmitted infection in cases of sexual assault, and the need for survivors to seek medical treatment such as post-exposure prophylaxis (preventive treatment).

PROVIDE INFORMATION

Now that you have a plan for reducing harms from alcohol and other drugs, make sure your attendees, volunteers, staff and collaborators know about it, and how to find support and services at the event. It may be helpful to have signs and educational material in multiple languages.

²¹ A directory of local victim-service and violence-against-women programs can be found here:

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bcs-criminal-justice-system/if-you-are-a-victim-of-a-crime>

²² For example: <http://www.consented.ca/consent/consent-and-canadian-law/>

²³ VictimLink BC is a 24/7 confidential and anonymous helpline that can provide immediate crisis support and referrals for victims of sexual violence and all other crimes: <http://www.victimlinkbc.ca> or 1-800-563-0808

²⁴ See the *British Columbia Major Planned Events Guidelines* for more detailed guidance about medical services at events: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/local-government/majorplannedeventsguidelines.pdf>

²⁵ BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre. *Sexual Assault Service Protocols and Tools*: <http://www.bcwomens.ca/health-professionals/professional-resources/sexual-assault-service-resources>

Consider hosting an awareness session for event staff and collaborating agencies to discuss public health approaches to psychoactive substances. It may be especially important for your event security and event medical team to talk through harm reduction approaches to alcohol and other drug use at the event.

STAFF TRAINING

Establish a policy for responding to alcohol or other drug use by staff or volunteers working at the event. Be advised that under the Special Occasion Licence for alcohol service, the licence holder, managers, staff, volunteers and security staff are not permitted to consume alcohol while performing their duties.²⁶

- *Serving it Right* training is required for paid staff and the licensee under the Special Occasion Licence, unless it is a private family event (such as a wedding or family reunion).
- Train staff to recognize and respond to a suspected alcohol or other drug overdose, including how to call for medical care.²⁷
- Ensure staff are familiar with VictimLinkBC. This is a 24/7 confidential and anonymous helpline that can provide immediate crisis support and referrals for victims of sexual violence and all other crimes (www.victimlinkbc.ca or 1-800-563-0808).

COMMUNICATION WITH ATTENDEES

- Inform attendees about any services or education initiatives that will be available at the event.
- Provide harm reduction information with tickets, on the event website, on social media, on posters and handouts. Examples of such information include *Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines*, information about the adverse effects of mixing alcohol with other psychoactive substances, and relevant local drug alerts.
- Inform attendees through the event website, posters or handouts about any planned initiatives to prevent sexual assault, as well as where attendees can access support resources at the event (e.g., event medical team and/or peer support).

MONITOR HEALTH RISKS

Work with the local health authority, first responders, law enforcement and security agencies, and harm reduction groups to track and analyze any incidents at the event that you think might be associated with alcohol or other drug use. Be prepared to warn attendees about contaminated/adulterated alcohol or other drugs, in case these are discovered at the event. Methods of tracking and communicating about alcohol or other drug-related health incidents at the event may vary, depending on the event's size, duration, composition and character.

Reporting a sexual assault can be daunting for survivors. Help survivors of sexual assault seek the care they feel would be most helpful. This includes offering referrals to a local victim-service or violence-against-women program, or VictimLinkBC (1-800-563-0808), for immediate crisis support. It may or may not include reporting the assault to police.

²⁶ See *Special Occasion Licence Policy Manual*: <http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/lclb/docs-forms/lclb208-policy-specialoccasion.pdf> and *Special Occasion Licence: Major Events Terms and Conditions*: <http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/lclb/docs-forms/guides-sol-major-events.pdf>

²⁷ *Overdose Survival Guide*: http://towardtheheart.com/assets/uploads/files/OD_Survival_Guide_Tips_to_Save_a_Life_2012.08.29_upright_for_website.pdf

CHECKLIST

Each event is unique, with different requirements. Checklist items may or may not be applicable to your event.

TO DO:

- If serving alcohol, obtain a Special Occasion Licence.
- Ensure required staff have a *Serving it Right* certificate.
- Work with local harm reduction organizations to provide information and other harm reduction services at the event.
- Set aside a quiet space at the event where distressed attendees can calm down.
- Contact a local organization or plan an in-house effort to promote a culture of consent around sexual activity and shared responsibility for preventing sexual violence at the event.
- Talk to your event medical team and event security providers about your harm reduction approach to alcohol and other drugs at the event.
- Let attendees know about harm reduction resources that will be available at the event.

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S HEALTH AUTHORITIES

First Nations Health Authority
<http://www.fnha.ca/>
 1-866-913-0033

Island Health
<http://www.viha.ca/>
 1-877-370-8699

Provincial Health Services Authority
www.phsa.ca/
 604-675-7400

Fraser Health
<http://www.fraserhealth.ca/>
 1-877-935-5669

Northern Health
<https://northernhealth.ca/>
 250-565-2649

Interior Health
<http://www.interiorhealth.ca/>
 250-862-4200

Vancouver Coastal Health
<http://www.vch.ca/>
 1-866-884-0888

LEGISLATION

Liquor Control and Licensing Act

http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/00_96267_01

Public Health Act

http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_08028_01

Note: BC's *Public Health Act* (2008) gives the Provincial Health Officer or a medical health officer the authority to require a health authority or another official to do a "diagnostic examination" of potentially hazardous agents. Under the act, the term "diagnostic examination" includes collecting substances for examination to identify hazardous agents.

RESOURCES

Harm Reduction Policy in British Columbia

BC Centre for Disease Control. (2014). *BC Harm Reduction Strategies and Services Policy and Guidelines*.

<http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Guidelines%20and%20Manuals/Epid/Other/BCHRSSPolicyandGuidelinesDecember2014.pdf>

BC Women's Hospital and Health Centre. *Sexual Assault Protocols and Procedures Manual*.

<http://www.bcwomens.ca/health-professionals/professional-resources/sexual-assault-service-resources>

British Columbia Ministry of Health. (2005). *Harm Reduction: A British Columbia Community Guide*.

<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2005/hrcommunityguide.pdf>

British Columbia Ministry of Health. (2006). *Following the Evidence: Preventing Harms from Substance Use in BC*.

<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2006/followingtheevidence.pdf>

Directory of Victim Service and Violence Against Women Programs

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bcs-criminal-justice-system/if-you-are-a-victim-of-a-crime>

Response to Alcohol- or other Drug-Facilitated Sexual Assault

VictimLinkBC: A 24/7 confidential, multilingual helpline that provides immediate crisis support and referrals for victims of sexual violence and all other crimes.

<http://www.victimlinkbc.ca/>

Phone (toll-free): 1-800-563-0808

Safer Drinking

BC Partners for Addiction and Mental Health. Safer Drinking: Beer, wine and spirits.

<http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/factsheet/safer-drinking-beer-wine-and-spirits>

British Columbia Ministry of Justice. Information on Special Occasion Licences.

<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/lclb/apply/special/index.htm>

Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines

<http://www.ccsa.ca/Eng/topics/alcohol/drinking-guidelines/Pages/default.aspx>

Serving it Right website: <http://www.servingitright.com/>

Special Occasion Licences and Special Occasion Licences for Major Events

<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/lclb/apply/special/index.htm> and <https://solo.bcldb.com/>

World Health Organization. (2009). Preventing violence by reducing the availability and harmful use of alcohol.

http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/alcohol.pdf

Mixing Alcohol with other Psychoactive Substances

Alcohol and Caffeine: A Bad Buzz

http://educalcoool.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Energy_drinks.pdf

Alcohol and Energy Drinks: Don't Get your Kicks from this Mix!

<http://www.ccsa.ca/Resource%20Library/CCSA-Alcohol-and-Caffeine-Fact-Sheet-Youth-2012-en.pdf>

Harm Reduction Supplies and Safer Partying Education

AIDS Network Kootenay Outreach and Support Society (ANKORS)

<http://www.ankorsvolunteer.com>

ANKORS, and UBC School of Population & Public Health. (2013) *“Start Small, Take it Easy”: Results from the ANKORS Harm Reduction Survey at the 2013 Shambhala Music Festival.*

http://www.ankorsvolunteer.com/uploads/4/6/9/3/46939087/ankors_2013_shambhala_survey_report.pdf

BC Centre for Disease Control. Harm Reduction.

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/harm-reduction>

Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse. (June 2015) *Preventing Drug- and Alcohol-related Harms at Music Festivals in Canada.*

<http://www.ccsa.ca/Resource%20Library/CCSA-Preventing-Alcohol-Drug-Harms-at-Music-Festivals-Summary-2015-en.pdf>

Canadian Students for Sensible Drug Policy. *Drug Checking Services Necessary to Prevent Youth Drug-Related Deaths.*

<http://cssdp.org/DrugCheckingBrief.pdf>

DanceSafe: Promoting Health and Safety within the Electronic Music community. <http://www.dancesafe.org/>

HealthLink BC. *Treating Opioid Overdose: B.C.'s Take Home Naloxone Program.*

<http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/hfile118.stm>. See also: <http://towardtheheart.com/naloxone/>

Here to Help: Mental Health & Substance Use Information. A Safe Night Out.

<http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/factsheet/a-safe-night-out>

Here to Help: Mental Health & Substance Use Information. Safe Tripping: Magic Mushrooms, LSD and other Hallucinogens.

<http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/factsheet/safer-tripping-magic-mushrooms-ld-and-other-hallucinogens>

Provincial Harm Reduction Program. *Overdose Survival Guide: Tips to Save a Life.*

http://towardtheheart.com/assets/uploads/files/OD_Survival_Guide_Tips_to_Save_a_Life_2012.08.29_upright_for_website.pdf

Provincial Harm Reduction Program. Toward the Heart.

<http://towardtheheart.com/>

Trip Project: Providing health info to Toronto party people since 1995!

<http://www.tripproject.ca/trip/>

APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE MASTER CHECKLIST

Each event is unique, with different requirements. Checklist items may or may not be applicable to your event.

DRINKING WATER

- Contact the local health authority (construction and operating permits).
- Obtain a water licence, if necessary.
- Determine the amount of water needed per person.
- Determine the number of outlets and locations needed for attendees.
- Determine the number of outlets needed for vendors and caterers.
- Arrange water hauling service contract, if necessary.
- Provide adequate lighting in areas around outlets.
- Sample and test water for bacteriological quality as required by the health authority.
- Ensure all equipment is appropriate for use and secure it.
- Check equipment and outlets regularly during the event to ensure they are working.
- Check outlets, drainage basins and surrounding areas regularly during the event to ensure they are clean and the ground is dry.
- Provide information to attendees about the signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses and make plans to encouraging people to drink water.
- Contact the local health authority (licensing).
- Check that all food premises/vendors have a:
 - FOODSAFE Certificate
 - Food Safety Plan
 - Sanitation Plan

SANITATION

- Ensure your sanitary facilities are:
 - Provided in sufficient number.
 - Located away from food storage and food service areas.
 - Well lit, including the surrounding area.
 - Well marked.
 - Secured to prevent tipping.
 - Easily accessible to service vehicles.
 - Provided with waste receptacles for sanitary products and paper.
 - Equipped with soap and hand-drying equipment.
 - Fitted with syringe disposal units.
 - Cleaned regularly and restocked throughout the event.
 - Odour free.

SOLID AND LIQUID WASTE MANAGEMENT

- Consider the audience size, area size, site boundaries, number of campers, and food concessions in planning the number of workers and waste receptacles required for the event.
- Contact local governments regarding any bylaws governing handling, storage and disposal of solid waste.
- Provide bins in:
 - approaches to the event
 - entrances and exits
 - arenas and stages
 - first aid areas
 - catering areas
 - camping areas
- Secure bins to prevent tipping.
- Arrange for bins to be emptied frequently.
- Arrange for the collection and disposal of hazardous waste.
- Ensure bins are easily accessible to service vehicles.
- Provide facilities for the storage and disposal of sewage.
- Ensure that service contracts for refuse collection and sewage collection are in place.

HARM REDUCTION

- If serving alcohol, obtain a Special Occasion Licence.
- Ensure required staff have a *Serving it Right* certificate.
- Work with local harm reduction organizations to provide information and other harm reduction services at the event.
- Set aside a quiet space at the event where distressed attendees can calm down.
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