

Mail-in drug check program now operating in Victoria

UVic-led project provides anonymous results online

Kiernan Green
News Staff

The Island's first mail-in drug checking model has been launched by a group staffed by the University of Victoria, in an effort to provide

communities without local facilities with potentially life-saving overdose prevention measures.

Those who have drugs they'd like tested for toxic substances can complete the new process by accessing substance.uvic.ca. Once there, users print and follow instructions for labeling and packaging before mailing to the Vancouver Island Drug Checking Project's indicated facility on Cook

Street in Victoria.

The online instructions include a personalized nine-digit code used to access and track the results of the user's drug check, which can be determined within 15 minutes of receiving the package and is typically posted online the same day, said programmer Bruce Wallace.

The mail-in system, launched Dec. 1 in partnership with UVic, Vancouver Island University, Island Health and

Solid Outreach, operates similarly to Vancouver's Check Your Drugs program.

Using equipment such as the paper spray mass spectrometer, Wallace and his colleagues can determine the main active ingredients and unwanted contaminants in a drug sample as small as a grain of rice, accuracy impossible using portable drug checking equipment, he said.

According to the First Nations Health Authority, 254 Indigenous people – many of whom lived in remote communities without access to drug-checking equipment – died from toxic drug use in B.C. in 2020, more than double the 2019 total of 116.

The Island Health region saw 239 deaths due to drug toxicity in the first seven months of 2021, according to the B.C. Coroners Service – B.C. saw a record 1,534 deaths in that time. Highly potent chemicals fentanyl and benzodiazepine were detected in 90 and 39 per cent, respectively, of Island Health's reported deaths.

The Vancouver Island Drug Checking Project mail-in system is legal under provincial overdose prevention law and completely safe to mail processors and carriers, Wallace said.

"People are not overdosing (in record numbers) from handling fentanyl. That's from consuming (undetected) fentanyl," he said.



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT NOTICE OF WAIVED PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Council of the Township of Esquimalt has waived the holding of a public hearing for Zoning Bylaw, 1992, No. 2050, Amendment Bylaw No. 3043, in accordance with Section 464(2) of the *Local Government Act*. The *Local Government Act* does not require the holding of a public hearing when zoning bylaw amendments are consistent with the municipality's Official Community Plan.

The Municipal Council will consider reading Amendment Bylaw No. 3043 a third time at the Regular Meeting of Council commencing at 7 p.m., January 24, 2022. This meeting will be held electronically and can be viewed by our live stream webcast at <https://esquimalt.ca.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx> or can be listened to via telephone using **phone number 778-401-4464** and entering **Conference ID 176 467 005#**.

Zoning Bylaw, 1992, No. 2050, Amendment Bylaw No. 3043 which provides for a change in the zoning designation of 1131 Wychbury Avenue [legal description below], shown hatched on the map below from RD-4 [Two Family DADU Residential] to CD No. 140 [Comprehensive Development District No. 140].

The general purpose of this change in zoning is to facilitate a subdivision of the property and allow an additional principal dwelling to be built south of the existing dwelling.

Site Location:



Description of Land:

1131 Wychbury Avenue [PID 005-910-951; Lot 12, Block 1, Section 11, Esquimalt District, Plan 5725]

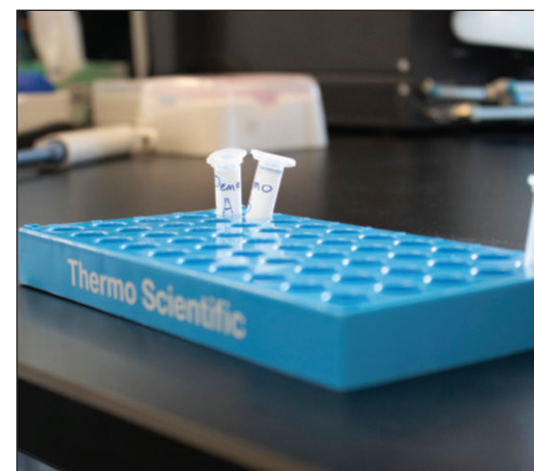
AND FURTHERMORE, TAKE NOTICE that copies of the proposed bylaws, relevant background documents, and other information related to this application may be reviewed from January 12, 2022 until January 24, 2022:

- online, by visiting the municipal website at www.esquimalt.ca/PublicHearing; or
- upon request, at Municipal Hall, 1229 Esquimalt Road, Esquimalt, BC, V9A 3P1, by booking an appointment either by emailing Karen Hay at karen.hay@esquimalt.ca or contacting Development Services staff via phone at 250-414-7103

Pursuant to the current public health orders, in-person capacity at the Municipal Hall is restricted. The Regular Meeting of Council will be streamed on the following link: <https://esquimalt.ca.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>. You may call in to listen to the meeting using **phone number 778-401-4464** and entering **Conference ID 176 467 005#**.

Affected persons may address Council by written submission before noon on January 24, 2022 to 1229 Esquimalt Road, Esquimalt, BC, V9A 3P1 or by email to corporate.services@esquimalt.ca. To arrange to participate by means of inclusion on the speakers' list, please call 250-414-7135 before 4:30 p.m. on January 24, 2022, to speak with the Corporate Officer. During the meeting you will be identified by the last 4 digits of your phone number when it is your turn to speak. Please note that there is an estimated one-minute delay in the live-stream.

DEB HOPKINS
CORPORATE OFFICER



A new mail-in program initiated by the University of Victoria allows Vancouver Island drug users in centres without drug-testing facilities to send in samples to be rapid-tested for toxic substances. (Photo courtesy Vancouver Island University)

Former restaurant employee charged with sexual assault

Victoria police have charged a former restaurant worker with sexual assault and assault with a weapon.

Dozens of sexual assault allegations against Jesse Chiavaroli arose on various social media pages in January 2021. Soon after, the Victoria Police Department

confirmed it was investigating reports. Online posts detailed allegations of sexual assault or harassment.

On Dec. 10, detectives with VicPD's special victims unit located Chiavaroli on the Lower Mainland and arrested him. He was released with a

court date and conditions not to contact the complainants involved in the case.

On Friday afternoon (Jan. 7), VicPD announced four charges of sexual assault and one account of assault with a weapon have been laid against Chiavaroli. His next court appearance is Feb. 24.

VIRTUAL EDUCATION EVENT



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