

SEASON SUMMARY REPORT
COLD WET WEATHER MAT PROGRAM
DECEMBER, 1st 2007- MARCH, 31st 2008

We began our program in December with snow falling our first night of operation. We saw many nights to follow with below zero temperatures and more snow as well as a lot of rain and wet weather.

The total number of beds filled for the season was 1,868. This included 1,565 mats used by men and 303 mats used by women. We had a total of 135 clients use our shelter over the four month season. This included 106 men and 29 women.

Through the last four months we had been located at five churches in the Tri-Cities area. These included the Four Square Church in Port Coquitlam, the Coquitlam Alliance Church, Calvary Baptist Church, and St. Andrew's Church in Port Moody and lastly the Eagle Ridge Bible Fellowship Church in Coquitlam where our program concluded.

We believe each church gave us their best efforts and every volunteer who gave of their time made a difference in our program. We saw people who were willing to open their hearts to our homeless clients and try to make their life circumstances a little brighter even if only for a night.

The meals served at each church were all extremely nutritious and most importantly hot and plentiful. The clients were grateful and impressed as we handed out a bagged lunch each morning after they had their breakfast and were dropped off where they had been picked up the previous night.

We also had three of the churches we were holding our program at donate backpacks for our clients. The backpacks for filled with various items such as toiletries, canned food, scarves, toques, gloves, etc. and were a very useful and appreciated gift for the homeless. The total number of backpacks given out this season was 63.

We have had quite a few minor incidents with our clients over our shelter season. Mostly with clients testing the waters to see if we would enforce and maintain our rules. We continued to follow our policies and procedures throughout the program and dealt with any incident quickly and without police involvement. We gained the respect and gratitude by standing firm with our rules and our clients felt safe and comfortable as they went to sleep at night in our shelter.

We as staff members feel the most important part of our program was the opportunity we had to meet and work with the homeless. We did our best to meet our client's needs nightly as well as encourage them to use the resources we could offer to change their living situations. We listened to their stories and could see the pain and suffering many of our clients had endured in their lives. We could relate to their challenges whether that being of addiction, alcoholism or living life on life's terms in society today. We watched as they began to open up their minds and become willing to choose the help we offered and that was our greatest reward as shelter workers.

By the end of our program we had 29 clients who had decided to take the steps to go into a treatment program or find their own homes. This we believe is directly due to our program being offered to these homeless people. They had the opportunity to actually see that someone does care about them in society. They were treated with respect and loving care and I believe this gave a lot of them hope and the courage to move forward and reach out to change.

Hope for Freedom Society

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We are proud of each success this program has brought and hope to continue making a difference in the lives of many and the community in the following season. As per schedule A, the first 7 activities and the first 6 milestones were accomplished.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa M. Batista,
Shelter Worker Supervisor