



CITY OF QUESNEL NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Campaign launched to raise land slippage awareness

QUESNEL, B.C. – A new project is underway to draw the attention of the provincial government to the West Quesnel Land Stability issue.

Members of the West Quesnel Land Stability Advisory Committee have initiated a new way of communicating the gravity of the situation to the Minister of Community Services, Ida Chong.

“At our last meeting, we decided to develop a postcard that shows how beautiful West Quesnel as a community is and what’s at stake if nothing is done,” said the committee’s chair, Dalton Hooker. “This problem isn’t going to go away and it’s too large for a municipality to handle on its own.”

The postcard features scenic photographs from around West Quesnel and a message to the Minister imploring her to find a way to fund the work needed to mitigate the problem. There is also space for residents to add their own thoughts.

A limited run of 1,000 cards was created that will be handed out at various community events, such as the Farmers’ Market, to ensure they make it into the hands of concerned citizens. The postcards are also available for pickup at the Quesnel and District Arenas and Recreation Centre, City Hall, the Quesnel Twin Arenas and the administration offices at West Park Mall.

An area in West Quesnel underlying the Abbott Drive and the Uplands neighbourhood is slipping at a rate of two to seven centimeters every year. The movement is occurring deep underground, from depths of 28 to 68 metres, and is caused by excess groundwater.

To date, the City of Quesnel has spent more than \$ 1.1 million in an attempt to mitigate the problem. That work includes initial engineering, geotechnical investigation and analysis, installation of slope inclinometers, peizometres and surface movement hubs, and the development, drilling and testing of trial dewatering wells.

Better surface water drainage, groundwater management and public education are all required to bring the situation to a manageable level and the City of Quesnel has developed a plan to ensure this happens.

“We have to keep working,” added Hooker. “The well-being of 2,100 people, 750 homes, an elementary school and the social structure of the neighbourhood, not to mention the economic spinoffs, are all at stake.”

“At an even deeper level, the West Quesnel Land Stability issue affects more than those people directly affected,” explained Hooker. “Every taxpayer in the City of Quesnel’s boundaries is affected, because their money is going to fix this problem. If we can convince people who live in Johnston Subdivision, Southhills, North Quesnel and all the other vibrant neighbourhoods in our city to sign on, our efforts will have an even bigger impact.”

Jack Marsh, the City of Quesnel’s Director of Public Works, said it’s critical a decision on funding comes soon.

“If we don’t get word soon work on our test wells will be delayed,” he said. “We need those wells in place to determine that pattern of the groundwater over the winter and spring as part of our six- to eight-month testing schedule. If they aren’t drilled this fall, we could lose an entire year off our progress.”

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Editors please note that a detailed backgrounder, maps and photographs are all included as part of this media package and are available electronically.

This release is available at www.city.quesnel.bc.ca under What’s New.

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