

United for BC Wildfire Recovery



United Way

“United for BC Wildfire Recovery”

July 18th, 2017 - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Central and South Okanagan/Similkameen

Kelowna, B.C. – As fires continue to devastate British Columbia, United Way is mobilizing efforts through “United for BC Wildfire Recovery”, a national initiative preparing for the recovery and rebuilding of communities across the province. United Way Centraide Canada and United Way Thompson Nicola Cariboo (TNC) are driving the initial launch and efforts of the initiative with other impacted United Way regions are following suit.

“Recovery from a crisis like the B.C. wildfires will be a long process spanning months to several years,” says Danalee Baker, Executive Director of United Way Thompson Nicola Cariboo. “Recovery and rebuilding will look different for each community as well as each individual and family. It might be as simple as cleaning out a fridge, or as intensive as re-building a home from scratch or dealing with depression as a result of trauma. What will be the same for everyone is the fear and uncertainty that such a crisis brings.”

Today, United Way is launching “United for BC Wildfire Recovery” – a campaign to raise funds for important social needs like finding permanent housing, food assistance, trauma and mental health supports, and rebuilding social infrastructure to meet community needs once the fires die down and residents return home.

Funds raised through this initiative will stay in BC to support the greatest needs of affected communities. As the fire season evolves, this list will expand. People can support “United for BC Wildfire Recovery” by making a donation or signing up to volunteer for recovery efforts at www.unitedforbcwildfires.ca.

“Our hearts go out to all those affected,” says Kathy Conway, Board Chair of UWCSO. “We are still reeling from the terrible fire in Okanagan Centre, but hoping that we don't see further devastation in our region. We are preparing to mobilize should we need to and learning from the amazing efforts of volunteers and agencies in neighbouring regions.”

United Way’s information and referral initiative, bc211.ca, has recently expanded to cover the entire province with live web-chat and enhanced, centralized wildfire information to augment current communication channels to support the immediate needs of those in crisis.

United Way CSO has started a Social Recovery Task Force contact list to synchronise efforts to focus resources on the greatest needs. United Way is working closely with long-time partner Red Cross, Salvation Army and local regional districts to coordinate all activities related to recovery.

About United Way CSO:

For over 65 years, the United Way of the Central and South Okanagan/Similkameen has served the region from Lake Country in the North, to Osoyoos and Princeton in the South. Our mission is to improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action. The United Way invests time and resources in three focus areas that support all that kids can be, move people from poverty to possibility and builds healthy, strong communities. For more information, visit unitedwaycso.com or call 1-855-232-1321.

United for BC Wildfire Recovery



United Way

For more information, please contact:

Marianne Dahl, Marketing and Events Manager
United Way Central and South Okanagan/Similkameen
P: 250-860-2356 | Toll-free: 1-855-232-1321
E: marianne@unitedwaycso.com
W: www.unitedwaycso.com

Linda Yule, Executive Director
United Way North Okanagan Columbia Shuswap
P: 250.549.1346 | TF: 1.866.448.3489
E: unitedwaynoocs@shaw.ca
W: unitedwaynoocs.com

Danalee Baker, Executive Director
United Way Thompson Nicola Cariboo (TNC)
P: 250-372-9933 | TF: 1-855-372-9933
E: danalee@unitedwaytnc.ca
W: www.unitedwaytnc.ca