

WHEN SHELTER IN PLACE ISN'T AN OPTION: *ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH GUIDANCE DURING COVID-19*

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en santé environnementale



OUTLINE

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- ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS IN ENCAMPMENTS
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- CONCLUSION
- QUESTIONS?



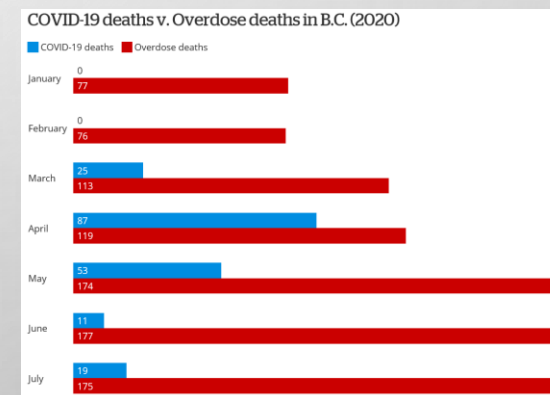
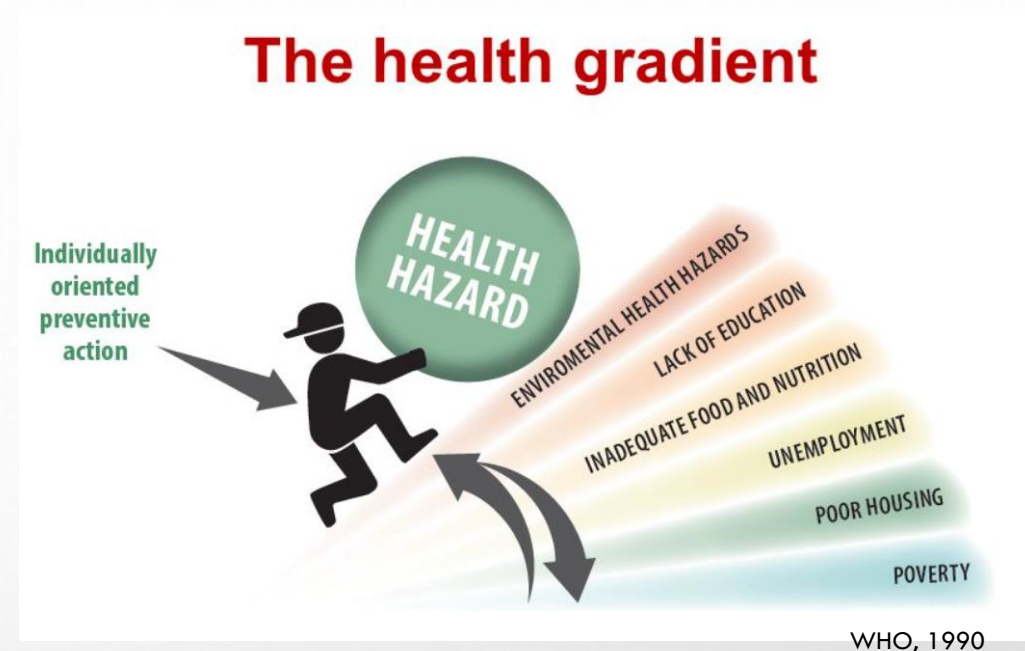
INTRODUCTION

- SARS-COV-2 TRANSMISSION RISK AND PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDANCE:
 - PHYSICAL DISTANCING
 - GOOD HAND HYGIENE
 - ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING
 - STAYING HOME WHEN ILL
- DEFINITION OF ENCAMPMENT:
 - IMPERMANENCE
 - CONTINUITY



BASELINE HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS

- ~35,000 PEOPLE ARE HOMELESS / NIGHT IN CANADA.^{5,6}
- NATURAL LIFESPAN CAN BE REDUCED BY 40%
- < 65 YEARS OLD: ALL-CAUSE MORTALITY IS 5–10 TIMES HIGHER.^{6,9}
- HIGHER RATES OF PREMATURE MORTALITY.^{10,11}
- OVERALL, CAUSES OF HOMELESSNESS



BC Ministry of Health/BC Coroners Service, 2020

BASELINE HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS

- UNSTABLE HOUSING CAN ENHANCE COVID-19 TRANSMISSION RISK:
 - BARRIERS TO ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES AND SOCIAL SERVICES.
 - CHALLENGES IN RECEIVING OR FOLLOWING PUBLIC HEALTH ADVICE.¹⁵
 - RISK IS AMPLIFIED BY CONGREGATE OR TRANSIENT LIVING.¹⁶
 - INCREASED EXPOSURE MOVING BETWEEN LOCATIONS.¹⁵
 - MANY FEEL MARGINALIZED OR STIGMATIZED.
 - ACCESS TO SHELTERS.
 - THERE HAVE BEEN OUTBREAKS OF COVID-19 **IN SHELTERS**^{17,18,19,20,21}



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS IN ENCAMPMENTS

- POTABLE WATER
- WASTE MANAGEMENT
- PEST CONTROL
- FOOD SAFETY
- EXCESSIVE CLUTTERING
- ENVIRONMENTAL EXPOSURES
- AIR QUALITY
- ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS...

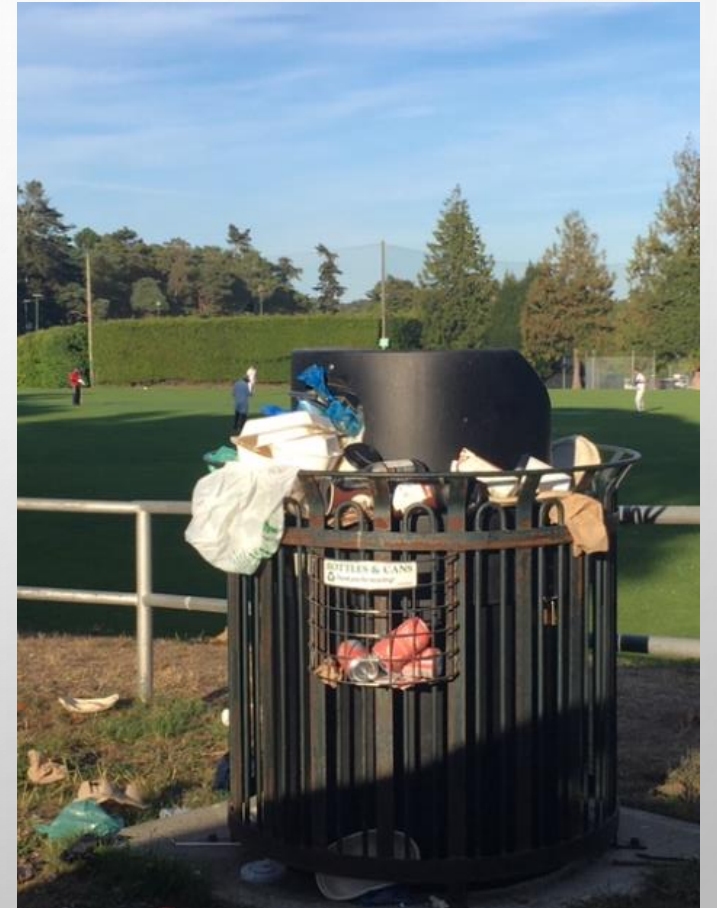


WATER AND WASTE



DO NOT CONNECT HOSE TO TAP

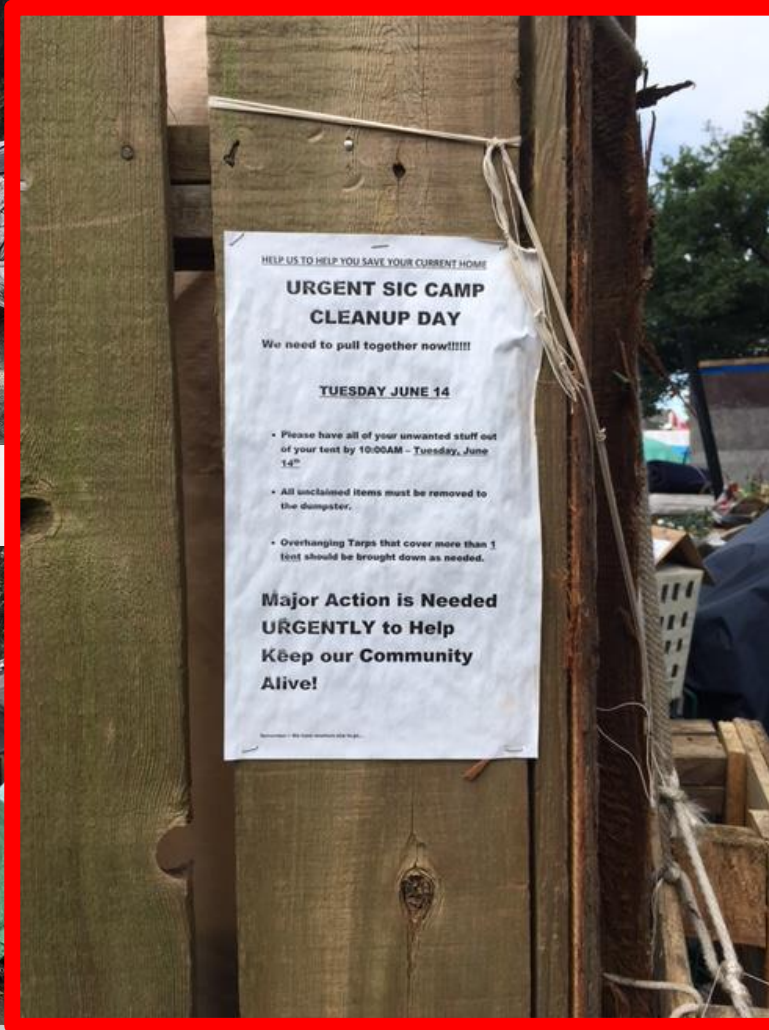
*-This could contaminate your
drinking water*



FOOD SAFETY



OVERCROWDING AND HOARDING



PEST CONTROL

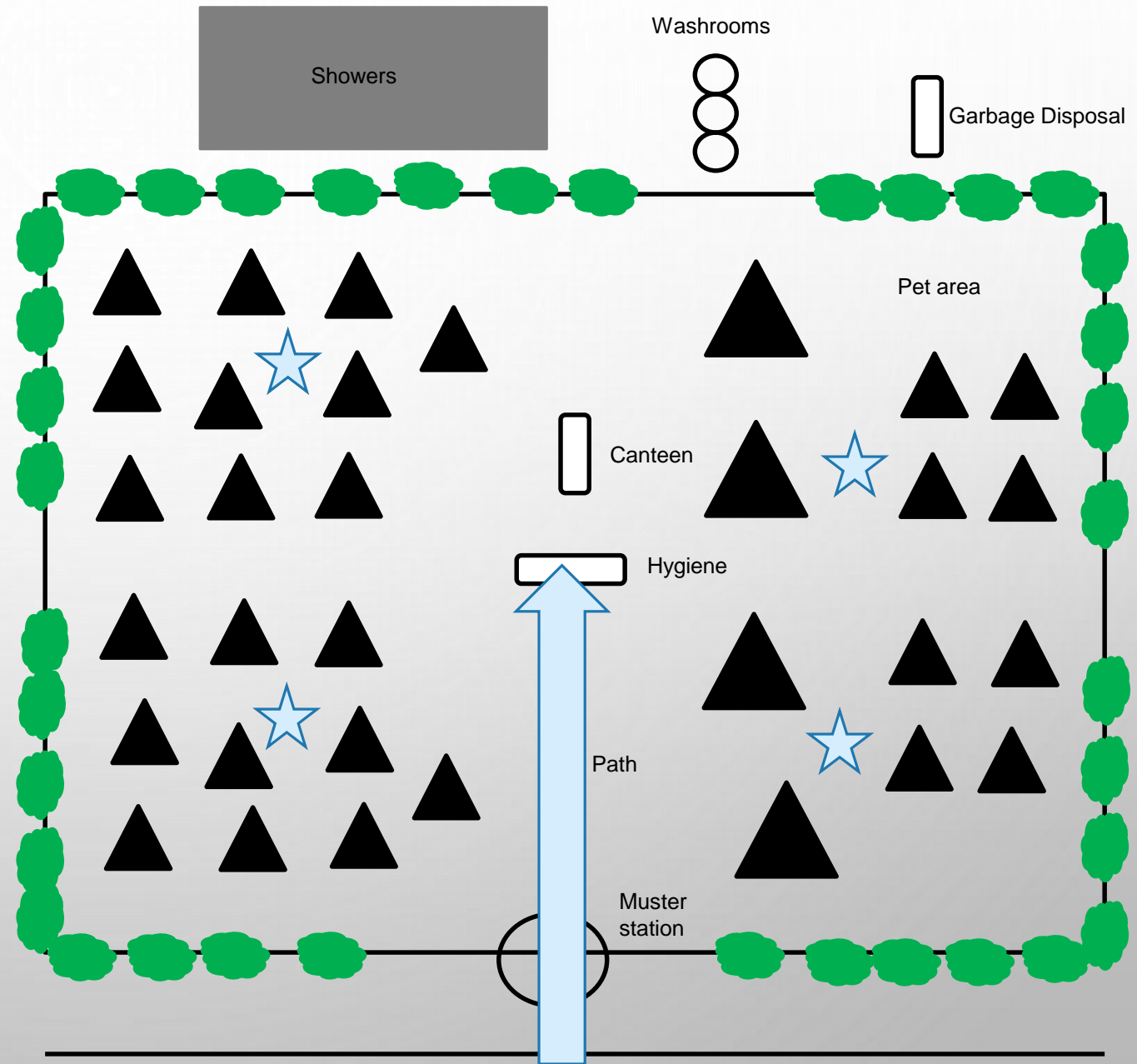


THE ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICERS (EHOS)

- INVESTIGATE PUBLIC HEALTH HAZARDS.
- CONSULTATION ON SITE PLAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS.
- PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS TO MINIMIZE RELATED RISKS.
- SUPPORTING EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRES.
- WHEN AVAILABLE, OFFERING SAFE DECAMPMENT PRIORITIES INTO HOUSING.
- ADVOCATE FOR LONGER-TERM SOLUTIONS IN LINE WITH CORE EHO COMPETENCIES.²⁷

Initial Planning

- SITE SELECTION
- LAYOUT
- FLOW
- SIZE
- WHO IS BEING HOUSED?
- PROXIMITY TO SERVICES



RECOMMENDATIONS TO MITIGATE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN AN ENCAMPMENT

- HYGIENE
- ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING
- PHYSICAL DISTANCING

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MITIGATE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN AN ENCAMPMENT

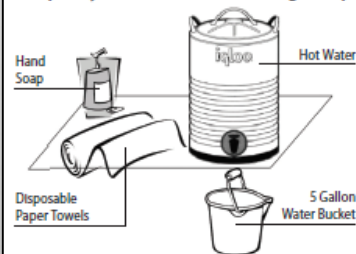
Hygiene

- Handwashing and toilet facilities
- Showers
- Laundry

Makeshift Sanitation Station If You Do Not Have Access To Water

Supplies needed: 5 gallon or larger gravity flow, insulated container, water, waste water bucket, soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer. **Ask outreach or frontline staff for help if you do not have 24/7 access to running water.**

Temporary Food Stand Handwashing Set-up:



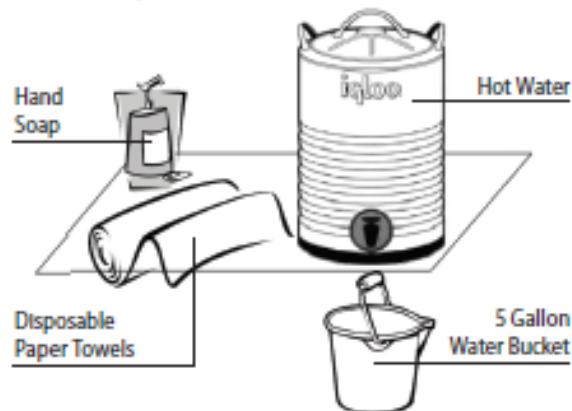
Yehia,
2016

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MITIGATE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN AN ENCAMPMENT

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Temporary Food Stand Handwashing Set-up:



List of disinfecting agents and their working concentrations known to be effective against coronaviruses^{1,2}:

Agent and concentration	Uses
1. 1:100 dilution Chlorine: household bleach – sodium hypochlorite (5.25%)* 10 ml bleach to 990 ml water	Used for disinfecting surfaces (e.g. hand railings, grab handles, door knobs, cupboard handles). Make fresh daily and allow surface to air dry naturally.
2. 1:50 dilution Chlorine: household bleach - sodium hypochlorite (5.25%)* 20 ml bleach to 980 ml water	Used for disinfecting surfaces contaminated with bodily fluids and waste like vomit, diarrhea, mucus, or feces (after cleaning with soap and water first). Make fresh daily and allow surface to air dry naturally.
3. Hydrogen Peroxide 0.5% Do not dilute your own.	Used for cleaning and disinfecting surfaces (e.g. counters, hand rails, door knobs).
4. Quaternary Ammonium Compounds (QUATs): noted as 'alkyl dimethyl benzyl ammonium chlorides' on the product label Do not dilute your own.	Used for disinfecting surfaces (e.g. floors, walls, furnishings).

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MITIGATE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN AN ENCAMPMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANING

- CLEANING FREQUENCY AND PRODUCTS
 - WHO IS TO PROVIDE THIS SERVICE?
 - DO THEY HAVE A PROCEDURE FOR CLEANING THESE AREAS?
 - WHAT SANITIZERS WILL BE USED?
 - WHAT IS THE FREQUENCY OF CLEANING HIGH-CONTACT SURFACES?
 - IF TENTS ARE PROVIDED FOR THOSE WITHOUT, WHAT IS THE CLEANING PROCESS?



RECOMMENDATIONS TO MITIGATE THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN AN ENCAMPMENT

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- HOW WILL PHYSICAL DISTANCING BE MET?
- IF PHYSICAL DISTANCING CANNOT BE MAINTAINED, WHAT MEASURES ARE IN PLACE (I.E., USE OF PPE)?
- WHAT COMMUNICATION TOOLS ARE BEING USED (E.G., SIGNAGE)?



COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

- **EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRES**
- **COMMUNITY COALITION**

<i>Health unit supports</i>	Medical Health Officers, Environmental Health Officers, Primary Care/Clinical Nurse, Mental Health and Substance Use Services, Harm Reduction, linkage to health services not provided at the ERC
<i>Key partners</i>	Housing authorities, local governments (staff and/or leadership), law enforcement, fire prevention, emergency management, outreach teams, homeless service providers, people with lived experiences of homelessness, other support services

List extracted and blended from [CDC Interim Guidance on Unsheltered Homelessness and Coronavirus Disease 2019²³](#) and the [BC COVID-19: Joint Provincial Program Framework for Emergency Response Centres³⁴](#)

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

- IDENTIFYING KEY PEOPLE – THE ROLE OF PEERS
- SIGNAGE IN STRATEGIC LOCATIONS
- OTHERS...

Wash your hands like
they're covered in



cheesie dust

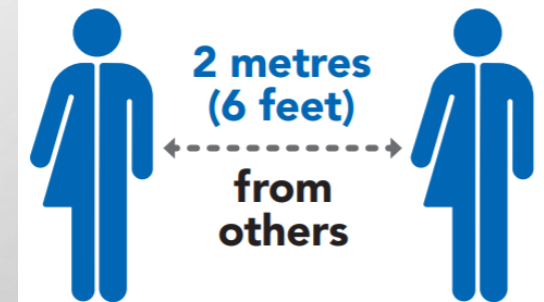


fraserhealth.ca/coronavirus



novel coronavirus (COVID-19)

**Keep
physical distance**



For more information visit
peelregion.ca/coronavirus

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of Peel**
working with you

THE CONTINUUM OF COVID-19 RESPONSE

- INITIAL SCREENING?
- ALTERNATE PLACES TO SHELTER?
- WHERE IS TESTING AVAILABLE?
- CONTACT TRACING AND SURVEILLANCE (ESPECIALLY WITH A MORE TYPICAL TRANSIENT POPULATION)?
- WHAT IS THE PROTOCOL FOR TRANSPORTATION?
- WHAT ARE SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS' PLANS?
- WHAT IS STANDARD FOR ISOLATION FOR THOSE AWAITING TEST RESULTS, OR THOSE WHO ARE CONFIRMED COVID-19 +VE?
- WHAT IS THE PLAN FOR DECAMPMENT?
- WHERE WILL PEOPLE GO ONCE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IS OVER?

HOUSING AS A CORE DETERMINANT OF HEALTH

- IT IS A TOPIC OF HEALTH EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS. “
- SAFE AND SECURE SHELTER AND HOUSING, WITH SANITATION FACILITIES, ARE DEFINITELY PREFERABLE TO PEOPLE LIVING IN ENCAMPMENTS.”¹
- *MUCH OF THE STIGMA ATTACHED TO ENCAMPMENTS IS... ENSUR[ING] ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES, INCLUDING ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER... RIGHTS TO HOUSING, HEALTH, SANITATION FACILITIES, ELECTRICITY, AND HEAT, AS WELL AS SUPPORT SERVICES*²

ALTERNATE MODELS FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

- DIGNITY VILLAGE
 - TINY HOUSE VILLAGE FOCUSSED ON COMMUNITY AND CAPACITY BUILDING.
 - SITUATED IN A PREDOMINANTLY INDUSTRIAL AREA, IT HAS COMMUNAL WASHROOMS AND A KITCHEN.
 - THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT CHECKS THAT HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS ARE MET.
- RIGHT TO DREAM TOO (PORTLAND, OR)
- MODULAR HOMES (E.G. CITY OF VANCOUVER)
- JOURNEY HOME STRATEGY (KELOWNA, BC)



CONCLUSION

- LINKAGE TO SAFE, SECURE, PERMANENT HOUSING IS A PRIORITY
- SPECIALIZED CONSIDERATIONS:
 - WATER
 - FOOD
 - SANITATION
 - PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES
- RESOURCE: [HTTPS://NCCEH.CA/DOCUMENTS/GUIDE/ENVIRONMENTAL-PUBLIC-HEALTH-GUIDANCE-ENCAMPMENTS-DURING-COVID-19-PANDEMIC](https://ncceh.ca/documents/guide/environmental-public-health-guidance-encampments-during-covid-19-pandemic)



QUESTIONS?

