



Services *for* **You**



Guide to Government of Canada Services in
British Columbia



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada 

Table of contents



Environment

How you can take positive action on climate change	4
Help your community protect the environment	5
Get your environmental project off the ground	5
British Columbians give the gift of nature	6



Health

How to keep your children active and healthy	7
Pregnant and in need of support? Here's how to get help	7

Information for consumers

Protect your rights	8
Pull the plug on junk mail and unwanted phone calls	8

Innovation

Frequent travelers to the U.S. can save time at border	9
Boost for Aboriginal business	9
Rural businesses get support	10

Internet



Public access to the Internet is available	11
--	-----------

Safety and prevention

Don't set sail without your boating competency card	12
A licence to fish	12

Youth

Your chance to explore and experience Canada	13
Take up the Canada Day poster challenge	13

■ Canada's New Health Care Accord	14
--	-----------

■ Contact the Government of Canada	15
---	-----------

Printing and distribution cost: 33¢ per unit



PF4-2/2002-10
0-662-67004-3

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada,
represented by Communication Canada, 2003

Introduction

Government of Canada services are designed to meet your changing needs. This guide, *Services for You*, describes a few of these services, how they work and how you can access them. It has seven sections. Each deals with individual needs or areas of common concern.

- Topics are in **bold**.
- Titles of booklets and pamphlets appear in *italics*.
- Toll-free telephone numbers and Web sites are provided at the end of each description.
- A detachable list of toll-free telephone numbers and Web sites for other frequently used services is provided at the end of the guide.



We encourage you to keep *Services for You*. If your needs change, it will help you find the right service.

About other services

To find out about other Government of Canada services:

- Call 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232), the Government of Canada information service;
- Visit the Government of Canada main Web site: canada.gc.ca

This guide is also available in large print, on audio cassette, in Braille and on computer diskette by calling 1 800 O-Canada.


Environment



How you can take positive action on climate change

Climate change affects our health, environment and economy. By using less energy, we can reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to **climate change**. Here are a few simple ways we can save energy every day:

- Turn off lights, appliances, televisions and computers when not needed.
- Seal leaks around doors and windows.
- Check the EnerGuide label when buying a new appliance.
- Turn off your vehicle whenever possible. Letting your vehicle run for just 10 seconds uses more fuel than restarting your engine.
- Lower your thermostat at night or when you're not at home.
- Take the bus. One full bus takes 40 vehicles off the road. That saves fuel and reduces carbon dioxide emissions and pollutants.
- Use compact fluorescent bulbs. They last longer and use 75% less energy.

 **1 800 O-Canada**

 www.climatechange.gc.ca

Identifying storms that raise sea levels

Global warming melts glaciers and ice caps, causing ocean levels to rise. Five years ago, El Niño caused sea levels along the B.C. coastline to climb an average of 30 centimetres. On some days, the water was as much as 60 centimetres above normal. Today, Government of Canada scientists are working to locate storms that raise sea levels and cause damage. Their goal is to warn coastal communities about such storms.

- Clean or replace your furnace filter regularly.
- Install low-flow shower heads.
- Fix leaky faucets.

Help your community protect the environment

Want to get your community involved in cleaning up the environment? Help is available through the **EcoAction Program**.

The program supports projects that protect the environment. If your non-profit group has an environmental project in mind, contact EcoAction.

☎ **1 800 667-7779**

🌐 www.ec.gc.ca/ecoaction



Nelson residents fight climate change

A group in Nelson is doing its part to fight climate change. With the support of the EcoAction Program, the group is informing Nelson residents about climate change and what they can do about it. It's also showing homes and businesses how they can reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

Get your environmental project off the ground

You can get **help to plan an environmental project** for your school, club or community. The guide, *Community Environmental Projects: From Needs Assessment to Evaluation*, tells you how to set goals, recruit volunteers, develop partnerships and communicate results.


☎ **1 800 667-7779**

🌐 www.ec.gc.ca/ecoaction


British Columbians give the gift of nature

British Columbia residents are helping to conserve ecologically sensitive habitats. More than 20 landowners have donated over 400 hectares of land, worth about \$11 million, through the **Ecological Gifts Program**. The program protects sensitive lands from damage and habitat loss. Many of these key habitats are on private property. Your generosity will protect the land from development.



 **1 800 668-6767**
 www.cws.ec.gc.ca/ecogifts



 www.weatheroffice.pyr.ec.gc.ca
and click on "Highway Weather" in the left menu

Check the forecast before taking on mountain passes

Poor weather often makes it dangerous to drive through mountain passes. Environment Canada, in partnership with the Insurance Corporation of B.C. and the B.C. Ministry of Transportation, provides on-line weather forecasts for major mountain passes.

Health

How to keep your children active and healthy

Keeping your children active is one of the best ways to help them stay healthy. Studies show that more than half of children and youth in Canada are not active enough. As a result, many young people suffer from childhood obesity. This increases their risk of health problems such as heart disease and diabetes.

Order your copy of *Canada's Physical Activity Guide for Children* and *Canada's Physical Activity Guide for Youth*. Both booklets offer tips to keep your kids active.



☎ **1 866 225-0709 (toll-free)**

📄 www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/paguide



Pregnant and in need of support? Here's how to get help

If you're expecting a child and need support, the **Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program** can help. The program helps pregnant women by providing nutrition counseling, food supplements, education, referral to other services and counseling on lifestyle issues such as alcohol abuse.

Programs are available in many communities across British Columbia including Victoria, Prince George, Nanaimo, Vancouver, Hazelton and Kamloops.

☎ **1 866 225-0709 (toll-free)**

📄 www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/childhood-youth
and click on "Community Based Programs"

Information for consumers

Protect your rights

Concerned about:

- Cutting your credit card debt?
- Reducing banking fees?
- Shopping safely on-line?
- Avoiding consumer fraud?
- Investing wisely?
- Protecting your privacy?

For practical tools and information to **protect your interests in today's marketplace**, contact Consumer Connection.



 **1 800 348-5358**

 **consumer.ic.gc.ca**

Pull the plug on junk mail and unwanted phone calls

It's easy to remove your name from many of the mail and phone lists companies use to contact you. Simply go to:

- strategis.gc.ca
- click on "Consumer Information" in the left menu
- then on "Consumer Connection"
- "Health and Personal" and
- "Resources for Seniors" under "Personal Services"

Innovation

Frequent travelers to the U.S. can save time at border

If your business takes you to the U.S. more than three times a month, you can **reduce the time you spend at border crossings**. The NEXUS system gives low-risk, pre-approved travelers access to dedicated lanes. The NEXUS service costs \$80 once every five years. And because NEXUS is a joint Canada-U.S. program, the one fee covers both countries.



☎ **1 866 639-8726 (toll-free)**

🌐 www.ccra.gc.ca/nexus

Frequent travelers in B.C. can access dedicated lanes at the following border crossings:

- Pacific Highway/Blaine
- Douglas/Peace Arch
- Boundary Bay/Point Roberts

Boost for Aboriginal business

Aboriginal Business Canada has helped thousands of Aboriginal entrepreneurs start or expand their businesses. Assistance is available to First Nations, Métis and Inuit, as well as majority-owned Aboriginal organizations. Aboriginal Development Corporations are also eligible.

Computer firm gets help to achieve goals

Information and support from Aboriginal Business Canada helped Aboriginal Computer Solutions Ltd. of West Vancouver achieve its business goals.

☎ **1 800 328-6189**

🌐 www.abc.ic.gc.ca

Rural businesses get support

Looking for help to expand your small rural business? Get the support you need at one of B.C.'s 34 Community Futures Development Corporations. These non-profit organizations are run by volunteer boards of directors and funded in part by the Government of Canada. They offer **loans and advice to small- and medium-sized businesses**. Some also offer self-employment programs for eligible candidates.



On top of his business cycle

When Daryl Racine of Merritt decided to turn his love of cycling into a business, he realized he needed help. Though he knew a lot about cycling, he knew little about running a business. The Community Futures Development Corporation in his area showed him how to organize his business, locate suppliers and arrange financing. It also provided financial support. Today his company, Bonzai Cycle, is a success.

 **1 866 685-2332 (toll-free)**

 www.communityfutures.ca

Research that truly pays off

Long before Colette Valdock started her business, White Weddings, she met with her local Community Futures Development Corporation who provided her with business training, advice and the strategies to develop a business plan. Originally, Colette's specialty was invitations. But she wanted to create a one-stop shopping Web site. She looked at hundreds of wedding suppliers and services. She took that information to heart while designing the Web site for her business. Today, 98% of her business comes from the Web. She receives orders from around the world.

Internet

Public access to the Internet is available

You don't have to own a computer to use the Internet. Chances are there's an organization in your area that offers affordable access to computers and the Internet. Through the Community Access Program, the Government of Canada helps community-based organizations in British Columbia buy computers. The **Community Access Program** also offers computer and Internet training in schools, libraries and community centres.



☎ **1 800 575-9200**

🌐 <http://cap.ic.gc.ca>

Francophone association gets connected

The Francophone association in Campbell River provides public access to the Internet, thanks to the support of the Community Access Program. The association also developed a Web site with links to resources across Canada and around the world. The computer access site has helped increase awareness of Francophone culture in the Vancouver Island community. Today, the association has about 500 members. Everyone is welcome to use its facilities.

Safety and prevention

Don't set sail without your boating competency card

Commercial and recreational boating is a vital part of life in BC. New rules have been introduced to make boating and related water activities safer. To operate a boat, you now need an **operator competency card**. To get the card, you have to pass a test from the Canadian Coast Guard. The test covers topics like regulations, minimum safety equipment requirements for your boat, the Canadian buoy system, and how to share waterways. To prepare for the test, you can take a course or learn by correspondence.



☎ **1 800 267-6687**
🌐 www.pacific.ccg-gcc.gc.ca
and click on "Office of Boating Safety"



☎ **1 800 267-6687**
🌐 www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca
and click on "Recreational Fishing Regulations & Updates"

A licence to fish

You need a **tidal water sport-fishing licence** to fish for finfish or shellfish in the tidal waters of B.C. For more information on salt-water fishing, such as rules and restrictions on various species of fish, visit one of the more than 600 sport-fishing vendors in the province. They also sell fishing licences.

Youth



Your chance to explore and experience Canada


Get to know Canada and yourself better by experiencing life in another part of Canada.

Exchanges Canada offers two exciting programs to help you learn more about yourself and your country.

Youth Exchanges Canada pairs Canadians aged 11 to 18 across the country. You'll help organize the exchange, do the research on your twin community, help raise funds and plan activities.

Youth Forums Canada brings people under 30 together in a Canadian community for at least five days. Your time will be dedicated to studying and discussing national institutions and issues of national interest.

In most cases, the Government of Canada will pay your travel costs.

 **1 800 O-Canada**
 www.exchanges.gc.ca

Take up the Canada Day poster challenge

Express your national pride, and show off your artistic skills, by entering the **Canada Day poster challenge**. The contest is open to youth across Canada. Finalists from each province and territory win a trip to Ottawa to celebrate Canada Day on Parliament Hill. One of their entries will become the official Canada Day poster.

Another honour for an honours student

An honour roll student at Burnaby North Secondary was B.C.'s finalist in the Canada Day poster challenge 2002. Her "Canadian Firsts" theme was selected from more than 1,100 entries from across the province.

 **1 800 663-5812**
 www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/affiche-poster

Canada's New Health Care Accord

Recently, the Prime Minister and the provincial Premiers reached an agreement about sustaining and reforming Canada's treasured health care system. To make that agreement a reality, the Government of Canada is **increasing federal funding for health care by \$34.8 billion over the next five years.**

The Accord reinforces the five key principles of the *Canada Health Act* and it provides increased support for existing health care services across the country.

Equally important, it seeks and finances change – for the better:

- better access to appropriate primary health care providers on a 24-7 basis, reducing pressures on emergency departments;
- improved home-care services and coverage against catastrophic drug costs;
- a compassionate care benefit, through employment insurance, for those who need to take time off work temporarily to support a gravely ill family member;

- new diagnostic and medical equipment, to shorten waiting lists and speed up treatments;
- secure electronic patient records, to avoid repetitive and time-consuming paperwork;
- more science and innovation at research hospitals;
- special attention will be paid by federal, provincial and territorial governments to the health needs of Aboriginal peoples.

The Accord also provides for the creation of a Health Council to report regularly to all Canadians on the quality of their health care system. Citizens and taxpayers have a right to know how health dollars are being spent and how health reforms are being implemented.

For more Health Care Accord information:

■ 1 800 O-Canada
(1 800 622-6232)
TTY 1 800 465-7735

■ canada.gc.ca