

NEWS RELEASE

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Pool schedules changing on January 8

Continuing to build pool programs post-pandemic

Summary

Updated pool schedules for Nanaimo Aquatic Centre and Beban Park Pool take effect on Sunday, January 8, 2023 so the City of Nanaimo is asking patrons to look at the schedule prior to coming to participate in public swimming or aquafit classes. Some swimming lessons will be affected by the changes, but clients will be contacted directly this week about that.

City of Nanaimo staff is actively trying to rebuild pool service levels back to their pre-pandemic levels. Due to staff shortages and increased demand from both the public and user groups, this is proving to be a challenge.

Nanaimo is among other communities dealing with this issue. The ongoing staffing shortages are causing many swimming pools around the nation to shorten operation hours and, in some cases, cancel sessions and programs completely. For safety reasons, staffing must be at certain levels in order to offer programs and public swimming.

There are many reasons for a shortage of lifeguards. The first is that lifeguard certification classes were suspended in the early stages of the pandemic that prevented new lifeguards from being trained and prevented those who already held certification from renewing it. Second, when pools were closed, many lifeguards found other jobs and ultimately chose not to come back to work in the pools. Staffing these empty positions has been slow going.

There are shortages in practically every sector - from convenience stores to restaurants and even the local community swimming pools.

To combat this, the City of Nanaimo has been recruiting staff through a variety of means - from advertising, attending career fairs and by offering training opportunities within Nanaimo pools.

A challenging situation for all involved, the City of Nanaimo is asking patrons to be patient and kind as this rebuilding and recruitment is underway.

Updated schedules can be found online in the Winter 2023 Activity Guide or by going to the "Register for a Program" area of the website. Users click on "Drop-in" and then choose the activity for the latest information. If there are changes to swimming lessons that are starting in January, staff will be contacting clients directly.

Last minute changes due to weather or staff shortages are posted as soon as possible on the City of Nanaimo website (recreation.nanaimo.ca page) and on the City Facebook page

Strategic Link: The City of Nanaimo is committed to the livability of its citizens.

Key Points

- Staffing shortages and increased demand in Nanaimo pools is causing lower than expected service levels post pandemic.
- Active recruitment is underway to attract new lifeguards to Nanaimo through advertising, career fairs and training opportunities.
- New schedules for Nanaimo Aquatic Centre and Beban Pool are starting Sunday, January 8 and have been recently updated on the City of Nanaimo website and on the online 2023 Winter Activity Guide.

Continued... Pool schedules changing on January 8

Quotes

"We ask that patrons to the pools be patient as the City works hard to recruit staff in order to increase pool services. This is an issue facing many other communities across the country."

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- Training opportunities for lifeguards are ongoing, and those interested are invited to go to the Lifesaving Society's website on how to become a lifeguard.
- New pool schedules will start on Sunday, January 8.
- To apply for employment with the City of Nanaimo, please visit www.nanaimo.ca

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