

## Preventing overdoses at Anita Place: a survey for opiate users

At Sunday's camp meeting, we discussed whether or not we should change the camp's system for preventing overdoses. We decided to ask opiate users what they want. Please fill out this survey and leave it in the survey box in the warming tent, or talk to Shawna!

Are you an opiate user? (please circle)      YES    NO

How should we prevent overdoses at Anita Place? (please circle)

1. Keep our current system: people use in the harm reduction tent, warming tent, and in their own tents, using the buddy system so no one uses alone. If someone goes down, other tent city residents around them respond with Narcan.
2. Keep our current system, but ask the government for a better harm reduction tent: something bigger, with lighting and chairs.
3. Use a more formal system, like the Overdose Prevention Sites in Vancouver. It could have a manager who isn't an active opiate user (like a nurse), and be staffed by volunteer community drug users.

Any thoughts or comments? Write them here!

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# Anita's News

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**Anita's News** is a weekly newsletter published by the Anita Place tent city. We're a newsletter written by and for the poor and homeless communities that call Maple Ridge home. If you'd like to submit writing, get in touch with Listen or Xylah or email us at [anitaplace.news@gmail.com](mailto:anitaplace.news@gmail.com).

## We have a right to survive!

by Ted Hajdu

Earlier this week the Maple Ridge Fire Department installed locked boxes around the bathroom and warming tent's electrical outlets, disrupting residents' ability to access electricity.

Residents had been accessing electricity against the fire department's rules as a justified act of resistance. Homeless people have the right to do what they need to do to survive. How many of Anita Place residents are over the age of 60? What makes us less worthy of the basic necessities of life that are awarded to housed residents of Maple Ridge? I'm talking about heat, water, sanitation, and the right to be left alone. These necessities are as basic as food and shelter.

The locking up of sources of electricity is symptomatic of how the municipal, provincial, and federal governments have spent years taking turns pointing fingers at one another rather than putting an end to poverty and homelessness. I'm tired and angry of hearing the same broken record played by the city over and over again - that the city is not responsible to poor and homeless people.

The purpose of taking away electricity is to keep residents in a state of duress. The city's combative approach to Anita Place and withholding of rights and resources that housed residents get makes people feel like they're spinning their wheels. We have lost three community members since this tent city started - Ed, Marno, and Adam. They didn't die of heart attacks. They died of government neglect. It's time to draw a line in the sand - enough is enough.

I'm disgusted by the government blaming homeless people for their own poverty and punishing them for surviving under inhuman conditions. We have a right to take what we need to survive!

## All-camp meeting minutes, Sunday April 1<sup>st</sup> 2pm

### **Demands to BC Housing**

- Electricity: for lights & charging phones—batteries are expensive, no one is using electricity to power heaters. We need it for safety
- Industrial toilets
- More gravel & pallets to lift up tents

### **Overdose prevention: should we change our system?**

- Current system: people use in the harm reduction tent, warming tent, and their own tents, relying on buddy system to keep safe
- Option 2: ask for a better using tent: a warm, lit, bigger space for the buddy system to operate
- Option 3: set up an Overdose Prevention Site, like the kind they have in vancouver
- Decision:** put a survey in newsletter and ask opiate users what they want.

### **Legal update**

- The lawyers think the city might respond to the modular housing announcement by filing another injunction, which will state that once modular housing is built, camp must close.
- We can fight this, like we fought the last two injunctions

### **Other updates**

- BC Housing wants to meet with camp council this week? May ask the camp to keep it at current size.
- Opportunity to tell BC Housing that we don't want supportive housing

### **One year anniversary plans (Our 1 year anniversary is May 2!)**

- Open house walking tour on Saturday, April 28th
- Start with short history in warming tent & have multiple stops around the camp where people talk about life in the tent city
- Townhall in camp on the night of the anniversary (May 2<sup>nd</sup>)

***Camp meetings are held every Sunday at 2pm in the warming tent  
– all residents of camp are encouraged to attend!***