



June 5th, 2024

BC Hydro

The District of Sicamous Chamber of Commerce has been contacted by our business community regarding the notification from BC Hydro announcing an outage scheduled for Sunday June 23rd between the hours of 7:00am and 3:00pm.

Sicamous is a resort community that relies heavily on tourism and tourism dollars to sustain its businesses. What you are proposing would close down our community on a weekend that is historically a very busy weekend for our businesses. Accommodators, restaurants, and retail stores will be most affected not to mention our boat rentals, marinas and Houseboat companies. Shutting off the hydro on Sunday June 23rd will not only disrupt the entire community it will deter visitors from coming to Sicamous that weekend, resulting in a significant loss in revenue for all. Accommodators cannot check out guests, provide breakfast or clean rooms, restaurants will loose out on a full day and evening of business with no time to prep and reopen for the dinner hour, retailers will have no traffic, marinas and houseboat companies will not be able to function. Visitors will not be able to access fuel or food and the impact on staff with the loss of wages will also be felt by this community that primarily offers seasonal employment.

Although your messaging suggests you make every effort to select a date and time that works best for all; it would appear that has not been the case in this instance. Emails and automated calls to announce the outage have been received but no discussion has taken place, to our knowledge, with the municipality, commercial customers, the Economic Development Corporation, or the Chamber of Commerce; all who could have provided you with clear messaging regarding the impact this particular time and date would have on our community.

How does BC Hydro select the date and time?

Whenever we can, in collaboration with our crews and contractors, our team starts weeks in advance to obtain feedback from commercial customers, municipal offices and community offices such as Business Improvement Associations and local boards on possible dates and times for the necessary outage.

Safety for the public and our crews, weather, traffic control, availability of specialized crews and equipment, community events, and the impact to critical sites, such as schools and hospitals are all taken into consideration when we select a date.

We respectfully request you reconsider this planned outage, keeping in mind the challenges our tourism businesses and community has faced over the last 4 years with COVID, wildfires and smoke. The businesses we have spoken to suggest an evening, midweek and that the work take place overnight. Conducting the outage over night will cause much less of an impact on the entire community. Businesses and residents can be better prepared, by charging phones, preparing food ahead of time and sleeping most of the time the outage will be taking place.

Additionally, the District of Sicamous Chamber of Commerce would appreciate being added to your contact list in the event of scheduled outages going forward and would be happy to provide information and feedback if requested.

Thank you in advance

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Dunnett', followed by a long horizontal line.

Samantha Dunnett

President, District of Sicamous Chamber of Commerce