

## April 2026 Issue

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**M'AKOLA**  
HOUSING SOCIETY

## Tenant Newsletter

Spring is finally in the air. It's time to stretch, refresh, and enjoy all the beauty and energy of the season. In this edition, we've got regional updates, including the "Spring Clean Up", which M'akola is happy to bring back to sites across the province. You'll also find scam information and an emergency preparedness plan. Celebrate Earth Day with creative upcycling ideas for Easter. Finally we have included a Spring colouring contest!

## Regional Office Updates

As we enter into Spring we want to encourage all tenants to use this opportunity for a Spring cleaning.

### Spring Cleaning

As April showers prepare for May flowers you can use the rainy days to clean up your home! An annual clean up can be overwhelming so we hope these tips will help:

**Declutter:** Start by deciding what you need in your home before cleaning around it. Take inventory of items and set some to be donated or coordinate the disposal with the Spring Clean Up in your region.

**Room-to-room & top-to-bottom:** Clean one room at a time to avoid taking on too much. You can also start top (fans, light fixtures, shelves) to bottom (floors & rugs) so if you can't complete the entire room you now where to start back up again when you have time.

**Get the little ones involved:** Children can help by going through their rooms to see what they can declutter or clean areas they can reach with water to avoid the use of toxic cleaning products

**Do what you can when you can:** Even if it's just 15

minutes every once in a while take pride in your progress. You got this!

### M'akola Spring Clean Up

M'akola Spring Clean Up is approaching fast! This is a time when M'akola provides large garbage bins at tenant complexes. You can use them to dispose of large unwanted items like old furniture, broken electronics, or other household waste. Please remember not to leave large items beside garbage bins as tenants will be charged back for the removal. All households will get a flyer specific to their complex.

### Air Conditioning Units

As warmer weather approaches we want to remind all tenants that window mounted air conditioning units are a not permitted as they are a health and safety concern.

Air conditioning units that do not extend past the window sill and have transitioning devices that are made for every type of window are allowed.

## M'akola Contacts

You can call or email the Housing Services Team at:  
**1-877-590-0204**

- For Repairs press 2
- For Rent Review press 3
- [rentreview@makola.bc.ca](mailto:rentreview@makola.bc.ca)
- For Rent Collections press 4
- [rentcollections@makola.bc.ca](mailto:rentcollections@makola.bc.ca)

For all other housing inquiries, questions, or concerns, please email:  
**INFO@makola.bc.ca**

Victoria Regional Office  
250-384-1423

Sooke Regional Office  
778-405-4240

Cowichan Regional Office  
250-746-1785

Nanaimo Regional Office  
250-756-4217

Port Alberni Regional Office  
250-723-9855

Comox Valley Regional Office  
250-923-4145

Lower Mainland Regional Office  
604-558-6194

Prince Rupert Regional Office  
250-627-7501

Terrace Regional Office  
250-638-8339

Please note M'akola offices will be closed the following dates:

Good Friday	April 3rd
Easter Monday	April 6th
Victoria Day	May 18th

## Be Aware of Increase in Scams

As taxes are due in April you may notice an increase in scams. M'akola tenants have also reported scammers posing as their landlord to fraud people out of money. Please read the tips below to be prepared!

### Tips in Identifying a Scam/Phishing Attempt

If you receive a suspicious call, email, or text ask the following:

- Were you expecting this call, email or text?

Most scam or phishing attempts are vague and rely on people's curiosity. If you were not expecting the message it could be a scam.

- Is it from a known or trusted source?

Is it a call or text from an unknown number or is the email from one you have never seen before? If so it could be a scam.

If you are uncertain you can end the call or texts and reach out to them at a different number. For example, if they claim to be your bank hang up the phone and call your bank at a branch you know. If they are unaware of the call it's probably a scam.

- Are they rushing you or claiming the matter is urgent?

Scammers often rely on a sense of urgency for you to act quick without thinking it through. If they are

pressing how "urgent" it is, take a moment. Ask if you can contact them later or call them back. If they say no it needs to be done urgently it's likely a scam.

- Do they want to move the conversation to a different platform or for you to click a link?

If texting, emailing, or even chatting on Facebook Marketplace while buying or selling an item, scammers will want you to click a link to continue the conversation on a platform where they can take your information. Never click a link you are unsure of.

### M'akola Contacts

If someone contacts you claiming to be your landlord and it doesn't sound right end the call or stop emailing.

Call or email your regional office to follow-up on the conversation. Call or email numbers you know are correct. Don't call a potential scammer back on the number they give you. You can always email M'akola at:

**INFO@makola.bc.ca**

# Emergency Preparedness—Emergency Plan

This issue of the section shows how to make an Emergency Plan so in the event of an emergency you and your family know how to respond to a disaster!

## Creating Your Family's Emergency Plan

If an emergency takes place you may not have the time to think about everything you need to do to keep your family safe. You can find templates on the BC Government [website](#). They also have an interactive Emergency Ready Plan process at:

[blog.gov.bc.ca/emergencymanagement/emergencyready](http://blog.gov.bc.ca/emergencymanagement/emergencyready)

If you are making your own plan follow these important tips and make your plan in a notebook or on paper you keep with your Emergency Kit.

### Home and Household Members

Write down your families home address and all the household members and their contact information (phone and email). In the event of an emergency you may not have your phone that has all this information saved.

### Important Contacts

Record all of your local emergency numbers. If you need immediate assistance from the police, fire, or ambulance always call **9-1-1**. If the concern isn't an emergency you want to have the non-emergency number for these services available.

In your Important Contacts section include important resources you can get information from. This could be the city or town you live in, a local radio station, social media sites that provide emergency updates.

To find contact information for your community go to: [civicinfo.bc.ca/municipalities](http://civicinfo.bc.ca/municipalities)

For government of BC emergency info updates you can go to: [emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca](http://emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca) and/or follow [@EmergencyInfoBC](https://twitter.com/EmergencyInfoBC) on X (Twitter).

### Emergency Meeting Place

Establish an emergency meeting place with your family. You will want one near your home and one away from your home if your family is separated at the time of an emergency.

### Important Health Information

Write down all of your health care provider's information. Record family members' Personal Health Number and any medical needs that you may need to provide at a hospital or to a doctor. Record the information of your insurance provider(s) too.

### Map Your Home

Put together a map of your home that shows where utilities are so they can be turned off in an emergency. Make sure you know how to turn off utilities.

Use the following symbols to mark the location of your utilities in the space below.

Electricity (E)  
Water (W)  
Natural gas (G)

**Example:** OUR HOUSE

Water Main Valve OFF Remember: righty tighty

Electrical Panel Push fully OFF

Gas Valve ON OFF

# Sisiyutl— The Two Headed Sea Serpent

The Native Sea Serpent symbolizes protection, supernatural power and revival. It is one of the most powerful symbols In [Kwakwaka'wakw](#) culture.

Sisiyutl (sometimes spelled Sisiutl) is a legendary creature of Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast. Not only can the Sisiutl change shape into a human or animal, but it can also transform its body into a self-propelled canoe that the owner must feed with seals.

The double-headedness of the creature also shows its powers since it can bring both bad and good fortune. Traditionally it is believed, interacting with a Sisiyutl can cause sickness or death, and in some tales looking at it will turn a human into stone. It is said that if someone can slay Sisiyutl they can use the creatures blood for its magical healing properties.



Many depictions of Sisiyutl were known to protect people from evil spirits. For this reason they were painted on sides of canoes and carved on planks there were placed at Big House entrance ways to protect inhabitants. Warriors often wore headbands, belts or other accessories with images of the Sisiyutl to protect them from harm. In some stories a Sisiyutl has shape shifting abilities and can travel the Earth with ease. It was known to move between land water and air freely. It can travel between the physical and spiritual realms too! In some cultures it is believed that mica, a mineral found on beaches were the scales from the Sisiyutl.

If you're interested in Sisiyutl, check out this interesting [CBC article](#) from 2020 that explains how a Sisiyutl piece of art that was in Chicago in 1893 was repatriated back to Alert Bay!



# Upcycled DIY Cereal Box Baskets

Get the kids busy making a recycled cereal box Easter basket. These baskets are the perfect size for gathering eggs.

## You Will Need:

1. A large cereal box
2. Acrylic paint and paint brushes
3. Construction paper or wrapping paper
4. Double sided tape
5. A Q-tip for making polka dots
6. Lace or ribbon
7. A black marker
8. Tissue paper to line the basket
9. Glue stick

All of these items can be found at the Doller store.



1. Cut the cereal box in half and paint it a warm yellow.
2. Cut out two wing shapes from the scrap cardboard and paint them yellow too. You might need to do a second coat to completely cover the packaging.
3. Use a ruler to measure and cut two strips of construction paper or card stock, and glue or stick them together with double sided tape.
4. Cut out a folded beak shape from construction paper in orange, then slightly smaller beak shape in pink. Glue the pink shape inside the orange shape.
5. Cut out two circles of pink for the cheeks, and draw two eyes in black marker on white paper and cut them out.
6. Glue the facial features on. Bend the wings slightly so they poke out a bit.
7. Attach the wings and handle with double sided tape.
8. Line the box with tissue wrap to finish.



## Did you know?

Approximately \$237 million was spent in Canada on Easter Chocolates in 2023, and 5 billion jelly beans are eaten at Easter globally.

# Earth Day

Earth Day will take place on April 22, 2026,

For more ways to celebrate Earth Day check out [earthday.org](http://earthday.org)

Earth Day is an annual event on April 22 to demonstrate support for environmental protection. First held on April 22, 1970, it now includes a wide range of events coordinated globally through [earthday.org](http://earthday.org) including 1 billion people in more than 193 countries!

The theme for Earth Day 2026 is **Our Power, Our Planet**, inviting everyone around the globe to unite behind renewable energy, and to triple the global generation of clean electricity by 2030.



## Earth Day Activities for Kids

1. Nature Scavenger hunt: Create a list for kids to find natural items like leaves, rocks and pinecones.
2. Litter clean up: Organize a park cleanup with gloves and trash bags to teach kids about reducing waste.
3. Gardening and planting: Plant seeds or wildflowers to support local ecosystems .
4. Bird Feeders: Build bird feeders from recycled materials like plastic bottles or a fallen branch to encourage wildlife.
5. Get outside and have a picnic. Make all your favorite healthy snacks.
6. Go for a family bike ride to a park or beach.
7. Upcycle an old bookshelf by turning it into a doll house and make all the furniture using things from the recycle bin.



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## Colouring Contest

Participate in this Spring inspired colouring contest by April 30th to be entered in a draw for a Visa gift card.

Paper copies can be picked up at your local M'akola office. Submit your entries to [INFO@makola.bc.ca](mailto:INFO@makola.bc.ca).



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## Provincial Resources

The following resources may be great supports for your household for health and wellness.

### **British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society**

BCANDS assists and supports their clients acting as a liaison/lead between various service agencies and their clients to address their needs and obtain or develop a variety of health and disability services.

More information can be found on their website:

[bcands.bc.ca](http://bcands.bc.ca)

### **Senior Services Society of BC**

This agency works across the province with different health authorities/SHINE partners. They have support services, financial assistance available, temporary housing programs, and other outreach services (referrals, advocate, connect with health authorities)

[www.seniorsservicesociety.ca](http://www.seniorsservicesociety.ca)

604-520-6621



### **HealthLinkBC: 8-1-1**

8-1-1 is a free-of-charge provincial health information and advice phone line. By calling 8-1-1 you can be connected to a registered nurse, a registered dietitian, a qualified exercise professional, or a pharmacist. Any one of these healthcare professionals will help you get the information you need to manage your health concerns, or those of your family

Call toll-free: 8-1-1

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More information can be found on their website:

[bcands.bc.ca](http://bcands.bc.ca)

### **Judy Bourne Memorial Scholarship**

It's that time of year again that M'akola is accepting applications for our Judy Bourne Memorial Scholarship. There are twelve scholarships available in the amount of \$2,500. The application deadline is **May 15th** visit [M'akola Development Services](http://Makola Development Services) website to learn more.

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## Port Alberni Resources

The following resources are available in your area and may be able to support your family at this time!

### **Spring Clean Up!**

The Port Alberni Region will be hosting a spring clean up sometime In **April** and **May**. Notices will go out to each complex closer to the time.

If you have any questions please reach out the Port Alberni office at

Ph: 250-723-9855

### **Port Alberni Friendship Center**

Address: 3555 4th Avenue – Unit A

Phone: 250-723-8281

The Port Alberni Friendship Center is an Indigenous Social service organization that provides Addictions & Mental Health Counseling, Sports & Recreation programs, youth & adult employment training programs, Family Law and Poverty Law Legal Advocacy Programs, Family Support, Early Childhood Development & Early Years, and much more. For more information check out their website:

[pafriendshipcenter.com](http://pafriendshipcenter.com)

### **Pacific Rim Children & Families**

Address: 3500 Argyle Street

Located in the Family Hub at EJ Dunn Elementary School

Phone: 250-724-0278

Email: [pacificrimchildren@sd70.bc.ca](mailto:pacificrimchildren@sd70.bc.ca)

Pacific Rim Children & Families helps families navigate early years services in the Alberni Valley and the West Coast. They are the early learning branch of School District 70 Pacific Rim and offer various onsite and outreach programming.

[pacificrimchildren.ca](http://pacificrimchildren.ca)

### **Salvation Army**

#### **Community Food Bank**

250-723-6913

Call to book an appointment. The Food Bank is open for appointments Tuesday to Thursday, 11AM to 3PM

[alberniavalley.ca](http://alberniavalley.ca)

### **The Port Alberni Association for Community Living**

3008 2nd Ave.

250- 724-7155

A source of support for people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

They offer a wide range of services including person-centered planning, employment supports, residential programs, and community-based activities.

[paacl.ca](http://paacl.ca)

### **Port Alberni Family Guidance Association**

3039 4th Ave.

250-724-0125

[info@pafga.com](mailto:info@pafga.com)

Provides free counselling services, supervised visits, Parents of Teens support group, and a Possibilities Youth Program for high-risk youth ages 15-26.

[pafamilyguidance.com](http://pafamilyguidance.com)