



MEDIA RELEASE

UPDATE ON WELLAND HIGH BLAZE

For Immediate Release – June 18, 2011 – 6:45 p.m.

Welland – Welland Fire and Emergency Services continue to battle a blaze that began around 4:00 am at the former Welland High and Vocational School at the corner of West Main Street and Denistoun Street. Welland Fire is expected to be on site overnight to ensure the fire is completely extinguished.

Chief Prevost has called in Triple M Demolition Inc. to begin demolition of part of the fire ravaged structure in order to aid firefighters in extinguishing the persistent fire. “At this time we are only tearing down those portions of the structure that we feel are necessary to provide us access to areas of the fire we can’t get at”, stated Chief Prevost. “Once the fire is out and it is safe to enter the remainder of the building, further investigations will be done to determine whether further demolition will be required”, continued Prevost.

Pinchin Environmental has also been contacted and is on the scene monitoring air quality in the area and City officials will be monitoring water quality in the area as well. When extraordinarily high water volume usage occurs and the water supply is being pulled in a direction it would normally not flow, there may be a possibility of disruption of sediment in the system. Should residents in the area experience any discolouration or sediment in their water they are advised to contact Public Works at 905-735-1700 ext. 3000 and ask for the Water Quality division and the City will dispatch someone to come out to test your water.

Residents that were evacuated earlier this morning are expected to be able to return to their homes this evening, Chief Prevost has advised. However, Denistoun Street north of West Main Street will be closed until further notice.

In order to secure the site the entire area around Welland High has been completely fenced off. Although the area is fenced off, access to the sidewalk on the north side of West Main Street is still available for pedestrian traffic. Chief Prevost expects that the section of West Main that is closed at this point will be opened up late this evening and does not expect that alterations to tomorrow's Welland Rose Festival Parade route will be necessary.

Niagara Regional Police and the Office of the Fire Marshal remain on the scene and are asking for assistance from the public with respect to photos or information related to the fire. Visit <http://www.nrps.com/news/details.asp?id=mr1763> for more information.

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