

Volunteers sought to help at new emergency shelter

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If you enjoy helping people and respect the work of the Salvation Army, keep the evening of Tuesday, Nov. 25, open on your calendar.

That's when the Fort St. John Salvation Army Emergency Shelter is holding another orientation session for would-be volunteers. The session takes place at 7 p.m. at the shelter, 9908-106 Ave., situated just east of city hall next to the Peace River Regional District office.

"Volunteering at the Emergency Shelter is a non-financial way of helping the community," said shelter administrator Lori Ackerman.

"Volunteer work can be very rewarding. You also get to do a lot of networking outside of the industry you're employed in or attached to."

The city-owned shelter geared to adults, which will operate from 9 p.m. to 9 a.m. daily, is expected to open in the next two weeks - following renovations and training of volunteers.

Anyone who wishes to help supervise the shelter, said Ackerman, must be at least 19, supply three personal references and be willing to have a criminal record check undertaken by police. Registration forms for volunteers can be picked up at the Salvation Army Thrift Store.

"Volunteers will be volunteering under the umbrella of the Salvation Army so they'll be covered by our



Lori Ackerman

insurance." They'll also have to sign a statement of confidentiality. Crisis management training and an up-to-date first aid course will be made available.

Ackerman said volunteers would likely work a six or 12-hour shift on any given night. "You can volunteer by yourself or in a pair, with a friend, for example."

Typical duties of a volunteer include having clients sign their names in the log book, showing shelter users where the washrooms are, assigning beds, making coffee and doing some housekeeping duties.

"The Salvation Army is committed to looking after the needs of the community," said Ackerman. "This shelter is one of those needs."