

For Immediate Release  
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**VERNON AND PENTICTON OFFICES TO CONSOLIDATE IN KELOWNA**

KELOWNA – After a review by its Board of Directors, BC Assessment announced today it will consolidate its Vernon and Penticton offices in Kelowna by December 31, 2010.

“It is important to note that no staff will be laid off,” said Connie Fair, President and CEO. “The nine staff in Penticton and 13 in Vernon will be offered continued employment in the Kelowna office. The leases for these two small offices are expiring so it is an opportune time to amalgamate these operations that are within close proximity to Kelowna to save costs for taxpayers.”

- The timing of the announcement allows the 22 staff approximately one year to make personal arrangements about relocating to the Kelowna office. BC Assessment will provide all employees with individual support for a smooth transition.
- By consolidating operations in Kelowna, BC Assessment will save taxpayers an estimated \$441,000 annually, starting in 2011. The current Kelowna office will be expanded to accommodate the transferring employees.
- Very few of BC Assessment’s customers make inquiries in person at offices. In the Okanagan Region, more than 84 per cent of customers prefer the telephone to make contact. During the January 2009 inquiry period, when property owners received their new assessment notice, only 325 people made inquiries in person at the Vernon and Penticton offices.
- The Vernon and Penticton offices only service single family residential properties. All other property types in the entire Okanagan Region (e.g. commercial, farms, industrial, strata residential) are serviced in the Kelowna office.
- BC Assessment has improved its operations by getting more property information in a variety of ways, providing more data on the public website and using technology more effectively to link customers with the experts who know their properties.

“We remain committed to providing excellent property assessment services to residents of the Vernon and Penticton areas,” said Fair. “We will make sure that our staff are available to all property owners as required.”

BC Assessment is a provincial Crown corporation, governed by a Board of Directors, with the mandate to produce uniform and efficient property assessments on an annual basis for all property owners in the province.

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