

Open data portal to be launched today

By Chad Skelton,
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The B.C. government will launch an open data website today that will allow residents to download large volumes of government information for free.

Details on how the site will operate and what types of data it will provide were not available Monday, but the provincial government has scheduled a briefing for 9: 30 a.m. today to provide further details.

During the B.C. Liberal leadership campaign, then-candidate Christy Clark committed to creating an open data portal if she became premier.

"Government's data are the people's data and making that data available using open standards unlocks enormous potential for private sector innovation," Clark wrote in response to a survey on government transparency sent to her by The Vancouver Sun.

In response to that survey, Clark also specifically committed to making information on surgical waiting times, school test scores and public-sector salaries available in open data formats. The federal government and the City of Vancouver already have open data portals, as do the central governments of the U.K. and the U.S. Providing government data in electronic database format - instead of just on paper or in PDF files - allows citizens to more easily monitor how the government is working and for third-party developers to create tools based on government data.

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