

Victoria police back 'proper' injection sites

By **Barbara McLintock**
Staff Reporter

VICTORIA — Victoria's police chief says he supports safe-injection sites for heroin addicts — provided they're done properly.

"Properly is not a dirty room to fix in," Chief Paul Battershill said yesterday.

Rather, "properly" should include medical supervision, a parallel prevention program and a strong component to move addicts into other treatment.

"It needs to be part of a continuum of care," he stressed.

But in such circumstances, he believes a site might "be something that could be used to help people" who badly need it.

He'll be meeting next month with health officials and social planners from the

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City of Victoria to see what the next steps might be in setting up the project.

But he doubts that a program could be in place as soon as the one hoped for in Vancouver, which could get under way as early as January.

In fact, he said, that may be OK because Victoria can have the benefit of lessons learned from Vancouver's experiment.

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