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## NEWS YOU CAN USE

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Ministry of Justice

### **Many B.C. adults haven't prepared a will**

VICTORIA – Only 55% of adult British Columbians have a current and legal will, according to a provincewide poll conducted by Mustel Group for The Society of Notaries Public of B.C.

The B.C. notaries' society recently surveyed British Columbians to get a better understanding of their will preparedness and general thoughts about wills to ensure the society's services are aligned with people's real needs.

In the 2014 survey, the Mustel Group polled 502 adults in B.C. and found that 20% of people in the 18-to-34 age range, 51% between 35 and 54, and 83% of individuals 55 and older have a will in place.

Estate planning is simpler than most people think. Generally, you can create your will after only a couple of appointments with a legal professional. If you want certainty that your final wishes will be carried out, a will can help.

#### **Why It Matters:**

The Province is raising awareness about the importance of creating or updating a last will and testament by proclaiming March 31 through April 6, 2014, as Make-a-Will Week.

Implementation of the new Wills, Estates and Succession Act (WESA) on March 31, 2014, has made it easier than ever to make a will.

#### **Quotes:**

##### **Attorney General and Minister of Justice Suzanne Anton –**

"I understand how important it is to discuss estate planning with your family. That discussion will ensure your wishes are understood after you're gone. I encourage all British Columbians to create or update their will during our province's first Make-a-Will Week."

##### **Akash Sablok, president, B.C. Notaries and a Vancouver Notary –**

"A carefully planned estate can eliminate or at least reduce stress, conflict and taxes amongst loved ones of the deceased. Without a will there can be doubt, hurt feelings, and delays in administering the estate. One of the kindest things you can do for your loved ones is to leave your affairs in good order."

#### **Quick Facts:**

- The new Wills, Estates and Succession Act makes estate planning simpler and easier for the general public to understand.

- Having a will allows you to set out your wishes.
- A set formula will be applied to divide your property if you do not prepare a valid will.
- The legislation will not invalidate any wills validly made before it comes into effect.
- Some of the laws governing the interpretation of wills are changing, so individuals who already have a will may choose to have it reviewed by a professional to ensure their wishes are upheld.

**Learn More at:**

Make-a-Will Week: [www.ag.gov.bc.ca/make-a-will](http://www.ag.gov.bc.ca/make-a-will)

Society of Notaries of B.C.: [www.notaries.bc.ca](http://www.notaries.bc.ca)

**Media Contact:**

Lori DeLuca  
Ministry of Justice  
Government Communications and Public  
Engagement  
250 953-3196

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