

COVID-19

REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

MARCH 26, 2020

LOCAL UPDATES

- The Regional District, municipalities and First Nations communities in the region continue to coordinate and communicate through the Regional Emergency Operations Centre so that we can work collectively as a region, share information, share resources, discuss challenges and identify solutions.
- We are also working with other key stakeholders like the School Districts, Emergency Services, Emergency Management BC and Interior Health to provide support and coordination as required.



NEW PROVINCIAL UPDATES

- The Province today announced that it was enacting extraordinary measures under the Emergency Program Act to support the Province's response to COVID-19 and ensure a coordinated response across all local governments in BC. These include (but are not limited to):
 - establishing a Provincial Supply Chain Coordination Unit to coordinate the distribution of essential goods and services.
 - Banning the resale of food, medical supplies, personal protective equipment, cleaning and other essential supplies.
 - Restricting quantities of items purchased at point of sale.
 - Suspending all local states of emergency in BC, except for the City of Vancouver (there are none in the East Kootenay).
 - Making it easier for vulnerable to access critical services like food banks and shelters
- The Province also updated the list of essential services in BC to provide more clarity around a wide range of services covering everything from health and law enforcement to food/agriculture, critical infrastructure, sanitation, transportation and more.
- MSP coverage expands to temporary foreign workers until July 31.
- The Province is expanding the bc211 line to match seniors whose support network has been affected by COVID-19 with volunteers.
- The 211 service will take calls from people who would like to volunteer to help seniors in their community with basic needs, including grocery shopping and pharmacy drop-offs and check-ins. They will then share it with local community agencies to match seniors and volunteers who live in the same community.



Link to Provincial Updates:

- **COVID-19 Update:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020EM-BC0014-000575>
- **New Measures Under Emergency Program Act:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PSSG0020-000568>
- **List of Essential Services:** <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/essential-services-covid-19>
- **211 Line Expands to Help Seniors:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0109-000570>
- **Clinical Guidance for At-Risk / Dual Health Emergencies:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020MMHA0008-000572>

Current Situation in BC

(as of the morning of March 26, 2020)

Cases:

- Total confirmed cases in BC: 725
- New cases since March 25: 66
- Hospitalized cases: 66
- Intensive care: 26
- COVID-19 Related Deaths: 14
- Recovered: 186

Confirmed cases by region:

- Vancouver Coastal Health: 359
- Fraser Health: 241
- Island Health: 52
- Interior Health: 62
- Northern Health: 11

Link to full news release: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0111-000574>

Current States of Emergency

- [Public Health Emergency](#)
(declared March 17, 2020)
- [Provincial State of Emergency](#)
(declared March 18, 2020)

MORE NEW PROVINCIAL UPDATES

- The Province has announced new clinical guidance for prescribers, pharmacists and care teams to help at-risk populations and support people who have a history of substance abuse.
- Open Burning has been prohibited in all High Smoke Sensitivity Zones in BC until Wednesday, April 15 - including most of the Elk Valley and Columbia Valley, a pocket in Jaffray area, and a large area across Moyie/Cranbrook/Kimberley. This is to protect the air quality as air pollution can impact people's susceptibility to infection. [CLICK HERE](#) to view the map - no open burning is permitted in all zones in yellow.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING:

Now is the time we can make a difference. Physical distancing is our greatest weapon and defense.

- **Keep 6 feet (2m) between you and others** (it's like the length of a hockey stick)
- **Stay home** - cancel play/coffee dates, group visits.
- **Stay where you are** - absolutely **no** non-essential travel within your community or between communities.

NEW FEDERAL UPDATES

- The Federal Government is working to get the new Health Portal online for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit and once online, applicants should receive payment within 14 days of applying.
- The Canada Child Benefit is getting boosted in May.
- A new text scam started today in parts of Canada - use www.canada.ca to get information on the new Emergency Response Benefit, not a text message.
- The Federal Government has ordered stocks of supplies from domestic and international suppliers to meet the needs across the country.
- Over 158,000 people have been tested across Canada, including 58,000 since Monday.
- The penalties for disobeying the Quarantine Act for travellers returning to Canada were detailed today (see box at right).



As of March 25, all persons entering Canada must quarantine themselves for 14 days.

Under the Federal Quarantine Act, anyone who fails to comply faces maximum penalties of a fine of up to \$750,000 and/or imprisonment for six months.

Those found to be reckless and who've jeopardized someone's life, face a penalty of up to 1,000,000 and/or 3 years prison.

THIS IS NOT OPTIONAL.

LINKS:

- **Federal Quarantine Act & penalties for those who don't comply:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/news/2020/03/new-order-makes-self-isolation-mandatory-for-individuals-entering-canada.html>

THREE CHEERS

This is a hard time for so many. In the midst of it all, there are some great things happening as people try to support one another.

- This week at 7pm, doorsteps and porches were filled with cheering and sounds as people in Moyie, Cranbrook and Fernie (and beyond) cheered, sang, played music and saluted all the front line and essential service workers.
- Businesses in the Columbia Valley have banded together to create a support network and get creative in finding ways to provide service. There are new Valley Strong Boxes that have locally produced goods that can be ordered for April 10 delivery, Bunker Boxes with meats and sausage and more. Check out the Columbia Valley Commerce for info.
- What started as a mom's efforts to encourage love and good spirits in her neighbourhood in Nanaimo is catching on across the country as people decorate their windows and doors with colourful hearts.

NEED HELP WITH SUPPLIES?

If you need help with pick up of groceries, prescriptions or other essentials, OR if you are a volunteer willing to help others in need, there are a number of grassroots initiatives popping up. Here are a few:

- **Elk Valley:** <https://www.evcst.com>
- **Sparwood:** Sparwood has launched a volunteer registry. To learn more: <https://sparwood.ca/blog/News/2020-03-24-EmergencyPrepVolunteerRegistry>
- **Columbia Valley:** <https://volunteercv.ca/organizations/columbia-valley-covid-19-community-response>
- **Cranbrook Area (Facebook):** <https://www.facebook.com/groups/239248060594167>

Phone Numbers:

- **COVID-19 Information Line - 1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319).** The line is for non-health COVID-19 information. It's open seven days a week, from 8:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. MST
- **811** - dial 811 for health related information on COVID-19
- **Crisis Line: 1.888.353.2273** - free, anonymous support
- **Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868**

Online Links:

- **COVID-19 Self Assessment Tool & App** - use this online tool to complete a self-assessment & get updates.
- **BC Centre for Disease Control** - includes information on their testing protocols.
- **Interior Health** - links to the latest Interior Health information.
- **Government of Canada** - statistics, travel info and economic and financial supports available federally.
- **Province of BC Information Hub** - links to Provincial supports for non-health information (childcare, travel, employee/employer resources, business support)