

LOCAL UPDATES

- The Regional Emergency Services Operations Group - which is a branch under the Operations Section of the Regional Emergency Operations Centre meets once a week to discuss topics that pertain to their operations and readiness for this pandemic. The group provides a platform to discuss local Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needs, operational issues, training issues, successes and challenges. The group includes representation from municipal and rural fire departments, BC Ambulance, Search and Rescue, Emergency Support Services, Interior Health, RCMP, and Conservation Officers. The meetings have been well received and provide a good opportunity for regional collaboration and support between all East Kootenay emergency services providers.
- All local governments in the region remain united in the desire to reduce the impacts of this virus on our health care system and our communities. With the long weekend approaching, it is important that we continue to avoid all non-essential travel, stay close to home, and obey all physical and social distancing guidelines.
- While Emergency Room visits are generally down across the Province, hospitals are open if you have an emergency. Also, local doctors and medical health care providers remain ready to respond to patients' needs and many are using new tools to connect virtually. Contact your clinic if you need to access your physician.
- Cranbrook businesses and residents now have an additional two months to make payments without penalty on their City utility accounts on unpaid utility bill balances from April 30 to June 30, 2020.



NEW PROVINCIAL UPDATES

- Although the number of those in hospital and ICU has gone down slightly, there were another 5 deaths in BC in the past 24 hours.
- We must remain steadfast and strictly follow physical distancing, wash hands, stay home and avoid all non-essential travel.
- Of the 135 people in hospital, 10 are in Interior Health.
- Premier Horgan has announced new measures for British Columbians returning from international destinations including a new legal requirement to provide, and sign-off on, a self-isolation plan as part of the 14-day quarantine.
- The Ministry of Children and Family Development is establishing an Emergency Relief Support Fund for children/youth with special needs and their families. The fund will provide a direct payment of \$225 per month to eligible families over the next three months (to June 30, 2020).
- BC Housing is working to support women and children in unstable or violent situations with finding a safe space. Anyone experiencing violence or abuse, should contact: VictimLinkBC at 1 800 563-0808 or by email at: VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca
- \$1.8 million, will go to the BC Libraries Co-operative to support electronic resource licensing and expand online common collections for all public libraries. The additional \$1.2 million will be distributed directly to libraries to enhance digital / connectivity services by expanding Wi-Fi capabilities, offering community digital literacy training, enhanced online library programs and purchasing technology, such as tablets, mics and cameras.



Links:

- COVID-19 Update: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020EMBC0019-000663>
- Measures for Travelers: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PREM0019-000657>
- Safe Spaces Release: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020FIN0020-000656>
- Digital Literacy: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020EDUC0019-000652>
- Emergency Fund for Children with Special Needs: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020CFD0043-000650>

Current Situation in BC

(as of 3:00pm PDT April 8, 2020)

Cases:

- Total confirmed cases in BC: 1,336
- New cases since April 7: 45
- Hospitalized cases: 135
- Intensive Care: 61
- COVID-19 Related Deaths: 48
- Recovered: 838
- Long term care/assisted living homes currently affected: 21* (no new)

Confirmed cases by region:

- Vancouver Coastal Health: 615
- Fraser Health: 487
- Island Health: 81
- Interior Health: 130
- Northern Health: 23

Link to full news release: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0019-000662>

PARKS CLOSURES, CAMPING/ORV RESTRICTIONS ANNOUNCED:



- Starting this afternoon, the Province is restricting camping and motorized recreation (including the use of off-road vehicles) throughout the entire Kootenay Recreation Strategy area. The order applies to all crown land and Provincial rec sites within the plan area, but **DOES NOT** include private campgrounds/RV Parks.
- BC Parks is immediately closing **all** provincial parks until further notice in support of the federal and provincial directives that people should stay close to home to reduce COVID-19 transmission risk.
- BC Parks is also extending the ban on all camping in provincial parks until May 31, 2020, in alignment with neighbouring jurisdictions and the temporary closure of Canada's national parks. Refunds for bookings up to May 31 will be sent automatically.
- All Recreation Sites and Trails BC campgrounds and amenities remain closed.

Links:

- BC Parks Close: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020ENV0019-000645>
- Camping, ORV Restrictions in Kootenay: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020FLNR0019-000647>
- [Click Here to View](#) Kootenay Recreation Strategy Area Map

Open burning restrictions are in place across much of the East Kootenay. Visit www.bcwildfire.ca to view the map of affected areas.



NEW FEDERAL UPDATES

- 361,969 Canadians have been tested. As of 7:00pm EDT, there are 19,274 confirmed cases and 435 deaths.
- The Federal Government hopes to have the \$73 billion wage subsidy program running within three weeks.
- Some of the wage subsidy conditions originally announced as part of the program are being relaxed. Rather than showing a 30% decline from last year's revenues, companies can show a 15% decline in the month of March from March last year OR can use January and February of this year as a reference for showing a 30% loss of revenue.
- At the same time as the government encouraged all businesses affected by COVID-19 to consider how students may help them, new details were unveiled today for the Canada Summer Jobs Program. Some highlights include: boosting wage subsidies to cover up to 100% to cover cost of hiring students, extending the end date for employment to the end of February 2021, and hiring of part-time students.
- The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) is reminding all Canadians that #NowIsNotTheTime for social gatherings. Restrictions remain in place on all non-essential travel for foreign nationals, including United States citizens and residents, and Canadians who are planning to cross the border. Anyone coming back into Canada must do a 14-day quarantine.

LINKS:

- **Changes to Canada Summer Jobs Program to Help Businesses and Students:** <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/04/08/changes-canada-summer-jobs-program-help-businesses-and-young>
- **Canadian Public Health Guidance Regarding Use of Masks:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/news/2020/04/ccmoh-communication-use-of-non-medical-masks-or-facial-coverings-by-the-public.html>
- **Travel Restrictions Remain in Place at International Border Crossings:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/border-services-agency/news/2020/04/travel-restrictions-still-in-place-at-international-border-crossings-for-the-upcoming-long-weekend.html>

DO YOU SEW? OR, DO YOU HAVE MATERIAL TO DONATE?



There is an effort underway in the Columbia Valley to sew cloth face coverings for the community and scrubs and gowns for the medical community. To register to sew these items, sign up at: <https://volunteercv.ca/organizations/columbia-valley-covid-19-community-response>

If you have extra material that you would be willing to donate to for the making of cloth masks, or to make arrangements to drop off completed items, email echandler@shaw.ca.

Face cloth cover instructions: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

***with thanks to Dr. Gareth Mannheimer, Chief of Staff for the Invermere & District Hospital*

THREE CHEERS

A few great things to celebrate and acknowledge.

- Cheers to the Catholic Churches in Fernie/Sparwood for ringing their bells and to all who cheered from doorsteps and porches at 7pm to salute our front line and essential service workers.
- Thank you to the sewers of gowns, masks and headbands for both front line workers and community members. Your efforts are appreciated.
- Cheers to all the businesses who are adapting to the ever-changing landscape and working tirelessly to continue to serve the community. Even small things like directional arrows on the floor in grocery aisles is making a BIG difference. Kudos to all!

Phone Numbers:

- **1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319)**. The line is for non-health COVID-19 information.
- **811** - dial 811 for health related information on COVID-19
- **211** - seniors looking for help (or volunteers willing to help), can call 211 or visit: <http://www.bc211.ca/>
- **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)