

NEW PROVINCIAL UPDATES

- The Province will provide an update to the COVID-19 modeling on Friday.
- One of the three deaths in the past 24 hours was a man in his 60s in the Interior Health region. Of the 131 people in hospital, 11 are in Interior Health.
- The 21 affected long-term care and assisted-living facilities have a total of 265 cases of COVID-19
- There will be five virtual town halls held in each of the Health Authority areas, starting on April 17th. The date for the Interior Health Town Hall was not announced.
- The Provincial State of Emergency has been extended through the end of the day on April 28, 2020 to allow the Province to continue to use extraordinary powers under the Emergency Program Act to support the COVID-19 pandemic response
- The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is keeping all rest areas open during the outbreak to continue to support the trucking industry and flow essential goods & services.
- Liquor retailers, such as wine stores or private liquor stores, throughout the province are now allowed to temporarily operate between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m. daily. These time-limited measures should provide seniors and immuno-compromised populations the opportunity to buy liquor during early shopping hours already being provided by other retailers, such as grocery stores

Links:

- COVID-19 Update: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020EMBC0020-000702>
- Provincial State of Emergency Extended: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020EMBC0020-000697>
- More Support for Commercial Drivers: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020TRAN0056-000690>
- Liquor Store Temporary Extension of Hours: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020AG0031-000694>

NEW FEDERAL UPDATES

- As of 7:00pm EDT, 467,736 people have been tested in Canada, with 28,362 confirmed cases and 1,010 deaths.
- Dr. Tam reported that in late March when the growth rate was the fastest, the number of cases was doubling every 3 days. Recently, the doubling time is over 10 days; which speaks to the importance of staying home and staying the course. Just a few cases can spread quickly. We need to remain strong to prevent exponential growth rates.
- The Wellness Together Canada portal was announced today to provide access to mental health resources. You can access the portal through Canada.ca/coronavirus or the Canada Covid19 app.
- The Canadian Emergency Response Benefit program is being expanded again to include people earning some income, as well as seasonal workers and people who have recently run out of Employment Insurance benefits. The changes announced today will be backdated to March 15th.

Current Situation in BC

(as of 3:00pm PDT April 15, 2020)

Cases:

- Total confirmed cases in BC: 1,561
- New cases since April 14: 44
- Hospitalized cases: 131
- Intensive Care: 59
- COVID-19 related deaths: 75
- Recovered: 955
- Long term care/assisted living homes affected: 21

Confirmed cases by region:

- Vancouver Coastal Health: 670
- Fraser Health: 623
- Island Health: 92
- Interior Health: 146
- Northern Health: 30

News release:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0020-000701>

PROVINCE-WIDE BURNING RESTRICTIONS SET TO START & BC WILDFIRE FORECAST RELEASED



Effective noon (PDT) Thursday, April 16, 2020, most open burning activities will be prohibited across BC, including: Category 2 and 3 open fires; Resource Management open fires; the use of fireworks and sky lanterns; and the use of burn barrels.

Campfires (0.5m x 0.5m) will be allowed at this time.

These prohibitions apply to all rural public and private land within the RDEK. Municipal residents should check with their municipality to see if there are additional bylaws that apply.

The BC Wildfire Service also released its first seasonal fire forecast today. The overall forecast is for normal to dry weather patterns through April and May and a normal spring wildfire season.

LINKS:

- Open Burning Restrictions: www.bcwildfire.ca
- Open Fire Regulations Definitions

SUPPORT RESOURCES

- Wellness Together Canada: <https://ca.portal.gs/>
- Anxiety Canada: www.anxietycanada.com
- Bounce Back: <https://bouncebackbc.ca/>

All municipalities within the region have activated Emergency Operations Centres through the Regional Emergency Operations Centre. The regional district, municipalities and First Nations communities are working in this integrated model to coordinate and communicate throughout this pandemic response.



FEDERAL UPDATES - CONTINUED

- The Federal government is hoping to better define who essential services workers are during the First Ministers Meeting tomorrow night as it works collectively with the provinces on a program to top-up the pay of essential services workers making less than \$2,500/month.
- LuminUltra from New Brunswick is ramping up production to supply enough Covid19 test chemicals to meet the weekly demand in all provinces & territories.
- The Canada Border Services Agency is temporarily reducing the hours at 27 low-traffic ports of entry along the Canada-US border. These temporary measures go into effect April 15, 2020 at 11:59 pm EDT until further notice. The three BC crossings affected are: Cascade, Nelway and Rykert, while Del Bonita and Carway will be impacted in Alberta.
- Finance Minister Bill Morneau today announced immediate, temporary relief for federally regulated pension plan sponsors who are facing significant financial constraints. The relief measure includes a moratorium, through the remainder of 2020, on solvency payment requirements for defined benefit plans

LINKS:

- **Expanded Access to CERB & Support for Essential Workers**: <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/04/15/prime-minister-announces-expanded-access-canada-emergency-response>
- **Pension Plan Sponsor Relief**: <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/news/2020/04/government-announces-relief-for-federally-regulated-pension-plan-sponsors.html>
- **Joint Statement by Minister of Labour, and Leaders From Labour and Industry**: <https://www.canada.ca/en/news.html>
- **Fact Sheet Border Services Reduced Hours**: <https://www.canada.ca/en/border-services-agency/news/2020/04/covid-19--temporary-reduction-of-service-at-canadian-land-border-crossings.html>

PARKS CANADA SUSPENDS CAMPING, GROUP ACTIVITIES UNTIL END OF MAY



Parks Canada is extending its closures for camping, group activities and events at all its national parks, historic sites, heritage canals and marine conservation areas until at least May 31, 2020. The current suspension of visitor services and vehicle access, as well as the temporary closure of visitor facilities, will remain in place until further notice. Detailed information can be found at: pc.gc.ca



THREE CHEERS!

Three cheers to the sewists in Cranbrook, Kimberley, Marysville and Canal Flats who have been making custom head bands for front line workers and medical staff.

The headbands have buttons on the sides, so masks can be attached to the buttons to relieve pressure from the ears. So far, they've distributed over 375 to Cranbrook/Kimberley and have 250 going to Trail and 175 going to Sparwood / Crowsnest Pass.

NEED HELP OR WANT TO HELP OTHERS?

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:

- **Seniors**: call 211 or visit: <http://www.bc211.ca>
- **Elk Valley**: <https://www.evcst.com>
- **Sparwood**: <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:

- **1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319)**. The line is for non-health COVID-19 information.
- **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)