

LOCAL UPDATES

The East Kootenay Regional Emergency Operations Centre (REOC) will be coordinating on several fronts this week once the Province has unveiled its "Going Forward Plan," including:



- Advanced Planning Unit is coordinating with local municipalities, the RDEK and First Nations to plan together for the eventual re-opening of parks, facilities and services across the region
- Meeting with the Policy Group (which includes elected officials and CAOs from RDEK, Municipalities and First Nations) to discuss the region's challenges, opportunities and priorities moving forward.
- Continued coordination with emergency services and enforcement agencies to ensure front line responders have the support and information needed for the next phase of the response.
- Coordination of regional information to ensure consistency and clarity to the best of our ability.
- Ongoing communication with Interior Health and Health Emergency Management BC

In addition, the REOC continues to maintain situational awareness and preparedness as the spring melt is underway. Self-fill sandbag stations will be set up in Fairmont, Moyie and Cranbrook over the next few days along with updated guidance on how to maintain social distancing at the stations. These areas have been chosen due to their proximity to areas prone to early season flooding; however, additional stations will be established if required. Information on seasonal flood preparedness is being distributed this week and shared with municipalities and First Nations in the region for distribution within their networks.

The RDEK Board has approved waiving utility due date penalties to August 31, which will allow property owners to defer payment of utilities until August 31 without penalty. The Village of Radium Hot Springs Council has approved a deferment of utilities payments without penalty to August 31, extended business licences to December 31, and extended the Village property tax deadline to September 30 (5% penalty Oct 1, additional 5% penalty Nov 1). Other municipal deferments have been covered in previous issues of the snapshot and are available through municipal offices.

NEW PROVINCIAL UPDATES



- Workers returning to BC from the Kearl Lake site in Alberta are required to self-isolate for 14 days. Kearl Lake employers may have provided different advice to employees, however, BC workers must follow the BC order to self-isolate for 14 days. Workers who have very mild symptoms may not realize they are ill and could transmit to their families. It is crucial that workers, their families and their close contacts monitor for symptoms and get tested if they develop symptoms.
- In addition to the 15 BC workers from Kearl confirmed positive, an additional 8 confirmed cases and two presumed cases have been reported among British Columbians who did not travel to Kearl Lake but had contact with a worker. Cases were reported in three regional health authorities: Interior Health, Northern Health and Vancouver Island Health.

Current Situation in BC

(as of 3:00pm PDT May 5, 2020)

Cases:

- Total confirmed cases in BC (since January): 2,232
- New cases since May 4: 8
- Hospitalized cases: 78
- Intensive Care: 21
- COVID-19 related deaths: 121
- Recovered: 1,472
- Long term care/assisted living homes affected: 17
- Acute-care unit outbreaks: 5

Confirmed cases by region:

- Vancouver Coastal Health: 849
- Fraser Health: 1,031
- Island Health: 124
- Interior Health: 177
- Northern Health: 51

News release: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0026-000821>

PROVINCIAL UPDATES - CONTINUED

- The Premier will unveil BC's "Going Forward Plan" tomorrow afternoon at 4pm MDT (3pm Pacific Time).
- Although some restrictions are expected to be relaxed, British Columbians are being called on to prepare to maintain physical distancing for months to come as moving too quickly to relax restrictions could undo progress made.
- Of the 78 people in hospital in BC, 4 are in Interior Health.
- The Lynn Valley Care Home outbreak, which was the first long-term care outbreak in BC, has been declared over.
- The investigation and tracing continues for the outbreaks at the poultry plants and federal corrections centre.
- Yesterday, BC received 29,000 more goggles, 503,000 gowns and 100,000 surgical masks and is maintaining its supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) from traditional sources. It also continues to test PPE from non-traditional sources.
- The Province is launching a digital registration system for Emergency Support Services (ESS). The new platform will be available for communities to provide self-registration, digital registration and referrals, and basic reporting for evacuees.
- A 45-bed emergency response centre with wraparound supports is opening in Victoria, the first site in B.C. to feature pop-up privacy pods. This temporary accommodation site will house people who've been living in encampments.

Links:

- **COVID Update:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020EMBC0026-000822>
- **Self-Isolation Guidelines for BC Kearl Lake Employees:** <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/self-isolation>
- **Emergency Response Centre Opened in Victoria:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020SDPR0025-000818>
- **Digital ESS Registration:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PSSG0025-000813>

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.

KOOCANUSA AREA RESTRICTIONS REMAIN IN PLACE

The provincial order restricting overnight camping and motorized recreation - including use of off-road vehicles - throughout the entire Kootenai Recreation Strategy area **remains in effect** and apply to:

- all users (including residents and non-residents)
- all crown land within the strategy area
- all Recreation Sites & Trails BC campgrounds within the strategy area.

Although overnight camping is prohibited in this area, people may still use designated roads and trails on a day-use basis as long as they adhere to physical distancing guidelines and other restrictions, including Motor Vehicle Act and ORV Act, that may be in place. To learn more: <http://www.koocanusarecreation.ca/koocanusa-recreation-strategy>

Private campgrounds are not included in the order and are permitted to open provided they can meet the protocols set out by the Province. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and in the interest of the safety of all, most in the strategy area are staying closed until after the long weekend in May.



HOW TO SAFELY USE A CLOTH FACE MASK

Dr. Sydnee McElroy walks you through the safest way to use your cloth face mask: <https://youtu.be/yLuEwwGhBxl>

Source: Dr. Gareth Mannheimer, Chief of Staff, Invermere District Hospital

NEED HELP OR WANT TO HELP OTHERS?

There are people who still need a hand with everything from grocery shopping to social connections. Here are a few resources for people needing help or willing to volunteer:

- **Seniors:** seniors or volunteers can call 211 or visit: <http://www.bc211.ca> to be matched locally
- **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>

CELEBRATING NATURE IN THE COLUMBIA VALLEY

Organizers of the Wings Over the Rockies Festival are encouraging people to continue to enjoy and share the beauty of the Columbia Valley virtually as the Wings Over the Rockies festival has been canceled for this year. Photos of wildlife / nature will be posted on their website. To submit photos or questions about Valley birds, email wingsovertherockies@gmail.com

NEW FEDERAL UPDATES

The federal government has announced \$252 million in funding for the agri-food industry, including \$77.5 Million for food processors to protect worker safety through things like personal protective equipment, new health protocols, and social distancing support. \$125 Million will go to the national AgriRecovery program to support pork and beef farmers who have to raise their animals for longer due to delays in processing plants. \$50 million will go to the Surplus Food Purchase Program designed to help redistribute existing and unsold inventories, which could include products such as potatoes and poultry, to local food organizations serving vulnerable Canadians.

Link: <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/05/05/supporting-canadas-farmers-food-businesses-and-food-supply>

IT IS MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

May 4-8 is Mental Health Week in Canada and the theme this year is about social connection: "Let's #GetReal about how we really feel." To access resources and learn more, visit www.cmha.ca or [Wellness Together Canada](http://WellnessTogetherCanada.ca).

NO BURNING & NEW APP

There is no open burning allowed in the East Kootenay. The burning of brush, grass, yard waste piles (Category 2 and 3 open fires), use of fireworks or burn barrels are all prohibited.

Campfires (0.5m x 0.5m) **are allowed** at this time; including in the cities of Kimberley and Fernie, which recently lifted their bans. Municipal residents should always consult with their municipality before burning.

The BC Wildfire Service has launched a new app which includes an interactive map, fire reporting tool, and statistics. **To learn more about burning restrictions, visit:** www.bcwildfire.ca

Link to BC Wildfire App News Release: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020FLNR0025-000815>

Phone Numbers:

- **1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319).** Non-health COVID-19 information. Open 7 days/wk, from 8:30am to 9pm MST
- **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.
- **BC COVID-19 Dashboard** - a great source for up-to-date information and statistics.
- **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** - (info on childcare, travel, employee/employer resources, business support)

Link to Alberta COVID-19 Information / Statistics:

- **COVID-19 Info for Albertans:** <https://www.alberta.ca/coronavirus-info-for-albertans.aspx>

