

EAST KOOTENAY RESTART

The Parks and Open Spaces Subcommittee in the Regional Emergency Operations Centre held its first planning session with representatives from local and First Nations governments in the East Kootenay yesterday. Local trails, parks, sports fields, disc golf, tennis and pickle ball courts are among the first amenities scheduled to be open across the region between now and Tuesday. While these spaces begin to gradually reopen, there will be a big focus on personal responsibility as we venture out, including:

- stay home and away from others if you are sick;
- following physical distancing by keeping 2m apart from others;
- no congregating in groups and no large group activities;
- practicing good hygiene by washing hands before and after visiting amenities and carrying hand sanitizer/wipes; and,
- keeping your circle small.

Plans are being worked on to safely reopen additional amenities soon. The BC Recreation and Parks Association is working on some industry-wide guidance and recommendations, which will be reviewed and incorporated into local plans for parks and outdoor spaces. In addition to the outdoor spaces, two other subcommittees are working on reopening plans for facilities and services.

RDEK, municipal and several First Nation governments are participating in this collective, regional approach to our East Kootenay Restart. We will continue to provide updates as details are finalized.

NEW PROVINCIAL UPDATES

- There are 397 active cases of COVID-19 in BC.
- There have been no new long-term care / assisted-living facility or community outbreaks in the past 24 hours.
- Dr. Henry has released a fact sheet on the testing in BC. The fact sheet covers the history of the provincial testing approach from the start of the pandemic to the current practice, where anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 can now be tested.
- The Province will soon be introducing a "serology" test that will indicate if someone has been infected with COVID-19 in the past and has developed antibodies to the virus.
- Since last Tuesday, the Province has secured additional personal protective equipment (PPE), including 44,000 3M N95 and 85,000 alternate brand respirators; 324,000 surgical masks; 5 million pairs of gloves; over 500,000 gowns; and, almost 100,000 pieces of eye protection.
- The BC government is providing \$300,000 to support industry-led Buy BC e-commerce activities. The funding will help farmers, ranchers and food and beverage processors market their products online as locally grown, raised, harvested or produced, making it easy for British Columbians to Buy BC.
- Through the Homelessness Community Action Grant program and a partnership with 7-Eleven, the Social Planning and Research Council of BC has been able to secure 3,500 smartphones to be distributed by community organizations who provide services and support for vulnerable people. The smartphones provide vulnerable people better access to vital online resources and services, including arranging medication and safe supply delivery and virtual doctor meetings.



Current Situation in BC

(as of 3:00pm PDT May 12, 2020)

Cases:

- Total confirmed cases in BC (since January): 2,360
- New cases since May 11: 7
- Hospitalized cases: 63
- Intensive Care: 16
- COVID-19 related deaths: 131
- Recovered: 1,832
- Long term care/assisted living homes affected: 15
- Acute-care unit outbreaks: 5

Confirmed cases by region:

- Vancouver Coastal Health: 874
- Fraser Health: 1,124
- Island Health: 125
- Interior Health: 180
- Northern Health: 57

News release: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020HLTH0026-000866>

PROVINCE LAUNCHES NEW SURVEY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BRITISH COLUMBIANS' EXPERIENCE DURING PANDEMIC

Every British Columbian is being called on to participate in a new Provincial survey called "Your story, our future."

The goal of the survey is to hear about your experiences and actions in the COVID-19 pandemic so far. The survey can be accessed through the BC Centre for Disease Control website: www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-survey

The survey takes about 15 minutes to complete.

For those who cannot complete the survey online, or need assistance in another language, you can call 1 833 707-1900 toll-free to take the survey over the phone. Assistance is available seven days a week between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (Pacific time), in 150 languages.

PROVINCIAL UPDATE LINKS:

- **COVID-19 Update:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020EMBC0026-000867>
- **Dr. Henry Statement on Testing in BC:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/factsheets/our-bc-testing-strategy-for-covid-19-adapting-to-our-pandemic>
- **Buy BC E-Commerce Brings Buy Local Online:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020AGRI0017-000857>
- **Smartphones to Connect Vulnerable:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020SDPR0028-000858>
- **Premier's Statement on International Nurses Day:** <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020PREM0055-000856>

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.



NEW FEDERAL UPDATES

- Today, following priority scientific review, Health Canada authorized the first COVID-19 serological test for use in Canada, the DiaSorin LIAISON®.
- The Prime Minister has announced additional support for Canadian seniors today, including providing additional financial support of \$2.5 billion for a one-time tax-free payment of \$300 for seniors eligible for the Old Age Security (OAS) pension, with an additional \$200 for seniors eligible for the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS). The New Horizons for Seniors Program will receive an additional \$20 million to support organizations that offer community-based projects to reduce isolation, improve the quality of life of seniors, and help seniors maintain social support. Also part of the announcement, was the temporary extension of GIS and Allowance payments if seniors' 2019 income information has not been assessed. This will ensure that the most vulnerable seniors continue to receive their benefits when they need them the most. Seniors should submit their 2019 income information as soon as possible and no later than by October 1, 2020.
- Today, Minister of National Revenue announced that virtual free tax clinics will be held on an interim basis to help those that rely on this service while still following physical distancing guidelines. These free tax clinics, where eligible people can have community volunteers file their taxes, will be offered by local organizations, in partnership with the Canada Revenue Agency's (CRA) Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) and the joint CRA and Revenu Québec Income Tax Assistance – Volunteer Program.
- Effective immediately, a new, temporary policy has been introduced to drastically reduce the time it takes for a temporary foreign worker to start a new job. While this policy is in place, a worker who is already in Canada and has secured a new job offer can get approval to start working in their new job, even while their work permit application is being fully processed. This will cut what can often take 10 weeks or more, down to 10 days or less.
- The National Research Council of Canada and the University of Saskatchewan's Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization-International Vaccine Centre announced a collaboration to work together to accelerate the development and production of a candidate COVID-19 antigen in mammalian cells. The antigen is a key component of a vaccine against COVID-19.

Link:

- **Serological Testing Approved:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/news/2020/05/statement-from-health-canada-on-covid-19-serological-tests.html>
- **New Supports for Seniors:** <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/05/12/prime-minister-announces-additional-support-canadian-seniors>
- **Free Tax Clinics Go Virtual:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/news/2020/05/free-tax-clinics-go-virtual.html>
- **Help For Employers:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2020/05/government-announces-help-for-employers-to-meet-their-labour-needs.html>
- **Collaboration to Advance Development of COVID-19 Vaccine:** <https://www.canada.ca/en/national-research-council/news/2020/05/the-national-research-council-of-canada-and-usask-vid-intervac-collaborate-to-advance-development-of-vaccine-against-covid-19.html>

SANDBAG STATIONS SET UP

With the arrival of warmer day time temperatures and an anticipated seasonal rise in creeks and rivers, and the possibility of heavy periods of rain in the next few days, a number of self-fill sandbag stations have been established, including:

- Cranbrook Public Works Yard - Cobham Avenue
- Old Barn - Mountainside Golf Course - Fairmont Hot Springs Road
- Windermere Fire Hall parking lot - Highway 93/95
- RDEK Pump House in Moyie - 9289 Tavistock Street
- Centennial Hall in Kimberley
- Fernie Public Works Yard - 1492 Railway Avenue

The sandbag stations have sand and bags; however, residents need to bring their own shovels and gloves. There is signage at the stations indicating safe practices during the COVID-19 pandemic including keeping safe physical distancing, refraining from sharing equipment, and washing hands before and after visiting the site. All stations are open to the public to use and additional sites will be added as needed.

DIX & HENRY TOWN HALL

Minister Dix and Dr. Henry participated in a virtual Town Hall last night to provide information on the reopening and plans to restart elective surgeries. To view the town hall: <https://youtu.be/tvrc30OfnhU>.

AROUND THE WORLD

The World Health Organization has been tracking the cases of COVID-19 around the world.

Visit: <https://covid19.who.int/> to get the global perspective.

RESOURCES

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 BC Restart Plan:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/bc-restart-plan>