

Message from Mayor Redekop

It is crucial that everyone follows the advice of medical experts to curb travel because of the increased chances for infection. We value our seasonal residents greatly as members of this community but we are asking cottagers, secondary homeowners, and seasonal residents to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by staying in their primary residence.

To those seasonal residents who have already returned to Fort Erie such as snowbirds returning from the south, please act responsibly to protect your community by physically distancing, practicing proper hygiene, and self-isolating as required. When self-isolating, do not leave your residence. Community resources are available to assist you with accessing essential supplies from home. Dial 2-1-1 for assistance accessing these resources.

Fort Erie boat launches are now closed

Earlier this week, the Town of Fort Erie has closed its Crystal Beach Waterfront Park boat launch to the public. The boat launch will remain open for emergency purposes and water rescues by approved agencies only. The sale and use of 2020 Boat Launch passes will also be postponed until further notice.

Outdoor recreational amenities closed

A reminder that all outdoor recreational amenities are closed. This includes municipal and school playgrounds, sports fields, off-leash dog parks, beaches, and others. Benches, pavilions and picnic tables are also closed to the public. Green spaces in parks, trails, ravines and conservation areas that aren't otherwise closed remain open for walkthrough access, but physical distancing must be maintained (2 metres distance).

Measures to support seniors in the community

During this time, Seniors Services, in partnership with local community agencies, will be taking a number of measures to support isolated and/or vulnerable seniors in the community, including a [Niagara Gatekeepers](#) hotline. Residents are encouraged to call the hotline if they identify any elderly neighbours with any of the following:

- Limited or no support from family or friends during this time
- Disclosed feeling alone or secluded
- Difficulty accessing essential supplies such as: food, medication, personal hygiene, housekeeping and pet supplies

- Difficulty arranging transportation to essential medical appointments
- Challenges obtaining income support (e.g. CPP/GIS/OAS)

The Niagara Gatekeepers line (905-684-0968) is answered between 8:30am to 8:30pm, 365 days a year. Information provided will be forwarded to a partner agency who will contact the senior and arrange services to help maintain their independence and stay safe at home. Services are only provided with the consent of the senior; all information is kept confidential and callers may remain anonymous.

Gatherings for Easter, Passover and other faith-based holidays

The Town of Fort Erie is reminding residents that gatherings of more than five people are currently illegal in Ontario. This holds true for private social family gatherings or religious celebrations for Easter, Passover or other faith-based holidays in April.

This law does not apply to private households with five or more people living in them. Residents celebrating Easter, Passover or other faith-based holidays are encouraged to find alternate and creative ways to celebrate, gather and worship during this time. Some recommendations:

- Connect with your faith leader to learn about options for worship services via Zoom, Skype or other online channels.
- Spend time with your family from a distance. Host a virtual family brunch or dinner online. Do not gather with those who don't already live in your home.
- Do not spend hours in the grocery store collecting every ingredient for a large family feast. Don't rush out for chocolate, jellybeans and holiday trinkets. Only go to the store for essentials, and only when you absolutely need to.
- Think of creative ways to keep your family traditions alive – like a virtual Easter egg hunt for children.

Holiday Hours

Town Hall will be closed from Friday, April 10 and will reopen on Tuesday, April 14 at 8:30 a.m. If you have a road, water, sewer or drainage emergency after regular business hours, please call 905-871-1600 and stay on the line. You will be redirected to a 24-hour answering service that will contact the appropriate supervisor.

THANK YOU!

We would like to thank our health care and social services providers who are doing everything they can to meet the needs of our residents and

visitors. We know you are committed to the well-being of our community in the face of this unprecedented crisis. Please know that we are grateful for everything that you are doing, and we know it is not easy.

We also want to thank our businesses that are still open and serving the public to ensure our basic needs are met. And, thank you also to the businesses who have had to close their doors. We are equally grateful for those employees who leave their homes every day, and for those who stay put and help us to flatten the curve. We will overcome this as a community, and we will rally behind you now and when this pandemic is over.