



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 2, 2020

By-law officers to patrol parks and streets in an effort to protect the health and safety of residents and limit the spread of COVID-19

Smiths Falls – Starting today, by-law officers from Frontenac Municipal Enforcement will be assisting the Smiths Falls Police Service in patrolling the downtown area, all parks, as well as residential areas in Smiths Falls. The goal is to educate the public and ensure compliance with new provincial orders related to gatherings of more than 5 persons, operations of non-essential businesses, use of park facilities and equipment as well as the quarantine order that has been issued.

“Although the majority of our citizens understand how important it is that we all do our part to “flatten the curve” and reduce the rate of infection in our community, further public education and possible enforcement is required to deal with isolated incidents,” said Shawn Pankow, Mayor of Smiths Falls. “The province introduced legislation to help empower our by-law officers in the fight against COVID-19. As a result, both police and by-law officers in Smiths Falls will be visiting businesses and patrolling our streets and green spaces to help educate the public and ensure proper compliance of the orders.”

On March 17, 2020, the Ontario Government declared a provincial emergency through the authority granted under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (EMCPA). [The emergency declaration has been extended until April 13, 2020](#), along with several other emergency orders, to contain the spread of COVID-19.

The emergency declaration and orders contain a number of requirements, including rules to restrict the following:

- [Gatherings of five or more people in public or private residences](#)
- [People congregating in parks/using park facilities or equipment](#)
- [Operation of non-essential retail businesses](#)

The Ontario Government [has granted by-law officers new authorities](#) to enforce rules set under the EMCPA. These powers are for use where persons or businesses are found to be violating emergency orders.

“The Smiths Falls Police along with our By-Law Officers would like to educate and make people and businesses aware of the provincial orders. Charges and fines are a last resort for those who continue to ignore the safety and health of others in the community”, says Police Chief, Mark MacGillivray.

If anyone suspects violations, they are to call the Smiths Falls Police Service non-emergency line: 613-283-0357.

Complaints regarding safe distancing practices and precautions of businesses that are open should be referred to the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit. The complaints line is 613-283-2740 ext 2499. These complaints will be directed to Health Inspectors for follow up.

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For further information, please contact:

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