



May 15, 2020

**MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Town of Smiths Falls reminds residents to stop the spread of COVID-19 and stay safe this weekend

Smiths Falls – The Town of Smiths Falls is issuing a reminder to residents to continue to do their part in stopping the spread of COVID-19, and stay safe over the Victoria Day long weekend.

The province of Ontario's recent announcement for the Stage 1 re-opening of some businesses is a positive sign, but it does not mean that vigilance is no longer necessary.

"We are looking forward to the re-opening of some businesses and services on Tuesday, but it is important now more than ever that we continue to follow social distancing protocols and guidelines issued by the province of Ontario," said Mayor Shawn Pankow. "It's important that residents and business owners understand that while the upcoming re-openings are a positive step toward recovery, it is not business as usual in Smiths Falls."

As per provincial guidelines, municipal parks and trails will remain open on the holiday weekend for walk-throughs only, and while ensuring minimum distancing protocols are maintained. The Town of Smiths Falls' indoor and outdoor facilities will remain closed over the long weekend to the public, including playgrounds, sports fields, sports course, off-leash dog parks, campgrounds and picnic areas.

The Town would like to issue a reminder of provincial restrictions for gatherings of no more than five people remain in place over the holiday weekend. Residents must maintain at least two metres between themselves and others outside of their household.

Town of Smiths Falls' Police Services and By-Law enforcement will continue to monitor public areas for compliance with provincial directives for social distancing.

"I'm so proud of the hard work our residents, businesses, and municipal staff have taken on over the past two months. We don't want to see an increase in new cases following the long weekend," Pankow said.

Re-opening Guidelines

Town of Smiths Falls' staff have been working to ensure facilities that are able to be reopened on May 19 are ready, at which time some municipal outdoor locations will be open for visitors, including:

- Off-leash dog parks (no more than five people at one time)
- Tennis courts (singles only play)

Residents are asked to remember there will be no hand sanitizers or washstands at these locations and residents should bring hand sanitizer with them. Users must also ensure the limit for gatherings of more than five people is respected.

Library services will remain closed while curbside pick-up strategies are developed. with a goal of offering limited services for residents beginning Monday, May 25.

As the province moves forward with Stage 1 of re-opening, there are actions both residents and businesses can do in order to keep themselves, and others safe, including:

- Staying home when feeling unwell.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Observing physical distancing rules and maintaining at least two metres between yourself and others at all times.
- Being patient and following store procedures to maintain physical distancing.
- Wearing a cloth face covering if you have must go places where maintaining distance is difficult or when it is required by a business.
- Practicing good hand hygiene, carrying hand wipes or hand sanitizer at all times.

The Town of Smiths Falls offers resources for businesses and residents on its **COVID-19 resource page** at <https://www.smithsfalls.ca/public-safety/covid-19-coronavirus/>

Businesses requiring additional information for re-opening guidelines can call the province of Ontario's **Stop the Spread Business Information Line** at 1-888-444-3659.

For further information, please contact:

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