



**MEDIA RELEASE
STATE OF EMERGENCY
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June 9, 2020

Town of Smiths Falls announces opening of splash pad, museums, patios; state of emergency to continue

Smiths Falls – The province of Ontario has announced the continued loosening of restrictions for recreation assets now that Stage 2 of COVID-19 recovery has begun. In Smiths Falls, the community splash pad and museums are being prepared for re-opening in the coming days, and patios will be permitted to open as of June 12.

“We are very pleased to see the province move into Stage 2 of recovery and look forward to the re-opening of the community splash pad, museums, and our local restaurant patios,” said Mayor Shawn Pankow. “As we move into the summer months these locations will be important community resources for citizens to use to cool off as temperatures rise, and to explore the community.”

At Lower Reach Park, it’s anticipated the splash pad will be ready to open by June 12, however access to team sports fields or equipment will continue to be unavailable at this time.

The Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario and the Heritage House Museum will require more preparation time in order to meet physical distancing requirements from the province of Ontario. The date of their re-opening will be announced by the Town through social media once all protective health and safety measures have been implemented.

Patios in Smiths Falls will also be able to open. As of Friday, restaurants and bars will be permitted to open for outdoor dining service only. This will include patios, curbside dining, or dining in parking lots and adjacent properties.

“It’s important to remember that while the lifting of these restrictions is good news it does not mean we are free from the effects of the virus,” Pankow said. “We must all continue to maintain a physical distance of at least two metres, and to wear a mask when it’s not possible to meet those distances, or when indoors.”

Other changes as a result of Stage 2 will include the opening of hair salons, barber shops, tanning salons, and shopping malls. Customers will also be able to tour wineries, distilleries and breweries.

Gatherings of up to 10 people will now be permitted, including for weddings and funerals, so long as physical distancing requirements are still being met and a minimum distance of two metres is maintained between people from different households.

In response to the province entering Stage 1 of recovery on May 19, the Town announced the opening of the public beach at Murphy Park, parks, and fields. The water inflatable at Murphy Park will not be available at this time.

Use of municipal recreation locations is permitted so long as less than 10 people are within the area at one time and physical distancing of at least two metres is maintained. Competitive play is prohibited.

The public is reminded that those who use any municipal asset must act responsibly. Users must avoid sharing equipment, water bottles or towels and must bring and use hand sanitizer at regular intervals. Hand sanitizer and hand wash stations will not be provided.

As the COVID-19 situation changes and new rules and guidelines are recommended by the province and local health authorities, additional restrictions could be introduced or lifted at any time. The Town of Smiths Falls’ Emergency Control Group will continue to provide updates to provincial orders as changes are made, and the Community Emergency Management Coordinator will continue to work in conjunction with the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit on the Stage 2 re-opening and recovery plan.

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