



*City of Sarnia*

***MEDIA RELEASE***

DATE: April 13, 2020 RELEASE DATE: Immediate

FROM: City of Sarnia Primary Control Group

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Update – April 13

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The Sarnia Primary Control Group met via teleconference on April 13, 2020 at 9:00 am regarding developments related to the COVID-19 pandemic. We received confirmation that, as of that time, the number of deaths connected to the COVID-19 pandemic within Sarnia-Lambton remains at 10 and that there are now 118 confirmed cases within this area.

The City of Sarnia By-Law Enforcement received the following complaints and concerns lodged through the COVID-19 reporting system from April 1-12, 2020:

- Total number of complaints received: 417
- Total number of emails received: 354
- Total number of phone calls received: 53
- Emails received over long weekend from April 10 to April 12: 49

COVID-19 Community Concerns:

The service allows the public to file anonymous concerns or provide tips relating to businesses or individuals who may be in violation of Provincial Orders regarding a range of COVID-19 concerns, including:

- Social distancing relating to private property;
- Non-essential businesses operating in contravention of Provincial Orders;
- Individuals returning to Ontario from outside the Country that are failing to follow Quarantine or self-isolation measures;

- Businesses not taking the advice, recommendations and instructions of public health officials regarding physical distancing, cleaning or disinfecting; and/or
- Individuals and families using park spaces and trails throughout the City.

#### Contact Us:

The COVID-19 email reporting service is monitored daily including nights and weekends to provide the best available response to public concerns and we continue to encourage residents to email us at [covid@sarnia.ca](mailto:covid@sarnia.ca)

The phone line is available Monday to Friday, excluding holidays, from 8:30am – 4:30pm and all messages received after hours are cleared the next business day. The number is 1-877-4-SARNIA (1-877-472-7642).

#### Key Reminders:

- Social distancing measures are recommended by the Chief Medical Officer of Health and are only enforceable where there are social gatherings of more than 5 people in a public or private place. This does not apply to a gathering of members of a single household.
- Social distancing is an essential way to slow down the spread of COVID-19. It's important that we all continue to follow the social distancing recommendations of The Chief Medical Officer of Health, whether you're in one of the high-risk groups or not.
- The Provincial Order does not preclude individuals from walking through or using portions of park and recreational areas that are not otherwise closed and that do not contain outdoor recreational amenities including; sports fields, playgrounds, basketball and tennis courts, off-leash dog parks, beaches, skateboard and BMX parks, picnic areas, park shelters, outdoor exercise equipment, condo parks and community gardens.

Please note the above numbers do not include calls that were received through the Sarnia Police Services and dispatched to By-Law Staff or investigated by the Sarnia Police Services.

We would like to remind the public that, under Ontario Regulation 104/20 issued under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, all outdoor sports facilities, such as the St. Patrick's track field, are required to be closed and that the use of these outdoor facilities remains strictly

prohibited. Anyone found to be in violation of the emergency orders will be charged and will face significant fines.

Sarnia Police Chief Norm Hansen is reminding people this long weekend to keep physical distancing in mind, and avoid large groups:

"I can tell you from my own experience Easter is a holiday that we always get together with extended family probably up to 15 or 20 people," said Hansen. "We're not doing that this year, we're staying home and that's just the way it is. I hope people obey this and listen, and you never hear me say this but I'm also hoping for bad weather." Lambton Medical Officer of Health Dr. Sudit Ranade said this is not the time to gather with extended family, and urged everyone to follow physical distancing rules.

Canada's Chief Public Health Officer Dr. Theresa Tam has said that people should have holiday dinners and celebrations with household members only, and connect with others via phone or video-chat.

The City of Sarnia and Sarnia Police Services will collaborate over the coming long weekend to coordinate the continued enforcement of these orders and directives and those who are found to violate these risk having charges laid against them.

Please note that the City is following directions received from the Province of Ontario, which does not mandate the closure of boat launches at this time, and will keep the boat launch located at Centennial Park open. We will continue to monitor compliance with the legal requirements that all users of the launch platforms continue to respect physical distancing guidelines, and the use will be restricted to use by inhabitants of one household at a time, before reassessing whether to keep this boat launch open.

We would like to remind the public that Transit is now operating a Saturday bus service during the week:

- Route 9 Exmouth frequency reduction
- Routes 4/3 Wellington Maxwell are combined
- Route 6 Mitton does not operate
- Routes with increased frequency during peak hours have less frequency or, Peak-hour bus frequency on certain routes will be reduced
- Route 10 Vidal will continue to operate to provide travel to essential employment during the week.

The City of Sarnia would like to remind the public that, based on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health of Ontario, all outdoor facilities and their associated parking lots will remain closed until further notice including all of the following:

- sports fields, playgrounds, basketball and tennis courts, off-leash dog parks, beaches, skateboard and BMX parks, picnic areas, park shelters, outdoor exercise equipment, condo parks and community gardens.

The advice of Lambton County's Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Ranade, remains that adopting safe hygiene practices such as physical distancing by keeping a safe distance of at least 2 metres from others and not gathering in groups of more than 5, regularly washing our hands, and not touching our faces will significantly help reduce the impact and spread of this pandemic.

Given the rapidly changing situation, we would like to refer concerned community members to the websites for Bluewater Health and for Lambton Public Health for up to date information on the COVID-19 Virus, including the number of active cases within our community:

Bluewater Health:

- <https://www.bluewaterhealth.ca/covid-19-information>

Lambton Public Health:

- <https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus/>

If you think you may have COVID-19 symptoms, or have been in close contact with someone who you believe may have been infected, first self-isolate and then use [Ontario's Self-Assessment Tool](#) to see if you need to seek further care.

To listen to a detailed listing of City of Sarnia closures and disruptions, you are encouraged to call our City of Sarnia Services Update Line at 226-778-4611 which will be updated daily.

### **Lambton Public Health Information:**

If you are experiencing symptoms and have traveled internationally, please call your health care provider or Lambton Public Health (519-383-8331) or <https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/> (Please do not call 9-1-1 unless it is an emergency).

The Primary Control Group will continue to meet daily to ensure that all new and relevant information is being taken into consideration going forward.

Daily public notifications will be issued. Please visit the City's website [www.sarnia.ca](http://www.sarnia.ca), Facebook, and/or Twitter for updates.

**- 30 -**

**For further information, please contact:**

**City of Sarnia COVID-19 Hotline**

1-877-4-SARNIA (1-877-472-7642) or 519-332-0932

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