

For Immediate Release

RE: Additional Service Changes and COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus)

Whitewater Region, Ontario – March 16, 2020

The Township's Municipal Emergency Control Group, comprised of the Mayor, Reeve, CAO and staff from key areas, met by teleconference tonight at 7:00 p.m. to review the current situation involving COVID-19.

In addition to the previously announced postponements and service changes listed below, the Township Administration Building at 44 Main Street in Cobden will be closed to the public effective immediately until further notice. This is in keeping with similar decisions by other municipalities. In addition, the Acting Fire Chief has enacted a fire ban to ensure fire forces can be maintained for emergency response as needed.

The municipal landfill at 90 Kohlsmith is also closed. Residents are encouraged to place garbage and recycling, in keeping with the usual schedule, at curbside.

Residents and clients are asked to refrain from attending municipal facilities and keep a 2m or 6ft distance from others. Municipal staff can be contacted by telephone or email. Appointments may be arranged where warranted. With outstanding payments, residents can mail cheques to the Township via regular mail, utilize the afterhours drop box at 44 Main Street, or pay online or at your bank. Dog tags can be purchased at local retailers or online on the Township website.

The Township is maintaining other essential services as we continue to monitor the situation with guidance from the health unit and other levels of government. Essential services such as administration, permits, curbside pick-up, fire response, water/sewer, and routine road maintenance are not impacted. Municipal flooding preparations are also underway with the securing of sandbags.

Our gravel roads are being impacted by the early thaw and freeze cycles. Regular grading operations will commence once the frost gets out of the roads and they can dry out. In addition to the Township's two graders, a third will be contracted to assist with spring operations. Potholes can be reported to the office or through the website.

The following changes were previously announced:

- The Mayor's Business Breakfast scheduled for March 24, 2020 is postponed.
- The Volunteer Appreciation Event being organized for National Volunteer Week is postponed.
- The next regular Council meeting is scheduled for April 15, 2020. Any special or emergency meetings will be called by Mayor Moore, as necessary.
- Arena operations in Beachburg, Cobden & Westmeath are suspended from Saturday, March 14, 2020 to Monday, April 13, 2020.
- WWR Libraries and the Westmeath Hall operated by the WDRA will be closed in keeping with the school closure until April 5, 2020.

Residents are directed to the Renfrew County & District Health Unit for information and guidance on COVID-19. The risk currently remains low in Renfrew County. Please refer to instructions on how to protect yourself and your family.

<https://www.rcdhu.com/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-2/>

Please follow these instructions to reduce the spread of germs:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use alcohol-based sanitizers.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, unless you have just cleaned your hands with soap.
- Cover your cough and sneeze with a tissue or into your arm, not your hand
- If possible, stay home if you are sick.
- Avoid visiting people in hospitals or long-term care centers if you are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- It is still recommended to get your flu shot if you have not already as the flu virus is still circulating in the community.

Additional information will be shared as available on the municipal website.

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Additional information:

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