



*The Corporation of the  
Township of White River*

*102 Durham Street, P.O. Box 307  
White River, Ontario, P0M 3G0*

*Telephone: 807-822-2450  
Fax: 807-822-2719*

April 17, 2020

Residents of White River

#### COVID-19 UPDATED RESPONSE

The Mayor and Council for the Township of White River would like to thank all residents of White River for their continued vigilance over the past month, while we've watched coronavirus statistics climb in all provinces in Canada and around the world.

By now, everyone is aware of the orders put in place. On our behalf, Municipal Staff have been working hard to get the word out; to speak to our vulnerable population; to set up delivery programs and work with businesses to keep the essentials open.

Just to confirm:

1. On the advice of the Chief Medical Officer of Health and with the approval of the Ontario legislature, the Ontario government is extending the Declaration of Emergency under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* for a further 28 days. This will allow the government to continue to use every tool at its disposal to protect the health and safety of the people of Ontario during the COVID-19 pandemic. Passed during a special sitting of the Ontario legislature and with the full cooperation of all parties, the Declaration of Emergency has been extended until May 12.
2. The Government of Ontario has issued an emergency order prohibiting recreational camping on public land as of April 9, 2020 (O. Reg. 142/20). This includes public lands covered by water or ice. Under the emergency order, no individual can camp on public land, including the placement of tents or other camping structures. The order also prohibits occupying public lands with watercraft equipped for overnight accommodation. The emergency order includes clarification on permitted activities.
3. Only essential businesses can remain open. A list of essential services can be found online at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/list-essential-workplaces>.
4. Starting April 3, 2020, Ontario's entire legislated fire region will be designated a Restricted Fire Zone. Residents who live in an area with a restricted fire zone cannot have an outdoor fire—this includes burning of grass, debris and campfires, even when using an outdoor fire grate, fire place or fire pit.
5. Indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and parks remain closed until further notice.

6. The Township of White River declared a state of emergency on March 25, 2020.
7. The Municipal Office and Service Ontario remain closed to the public; staff continues to work. If you have questions on any non-health related issues, please contact the office at 822-2450.
8. So far, fishing season will open on May 16, 2020, as scheduled.

The Provincial Government is standing behind essential businesses in Northern Ontario (including companies undertaking provincial highway construction projects between White River and Wawa). *All essential businesses* are tasked with safeguarding the well-being of their employees on the front lines by meeting their workplace health and safety obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and its regulations as administered by the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development (MLTSD). Workplaces that remain open are to be vigilant and to promote the highest possible standards of cleanliness and caution to protect the health and safety of workers and the general public.

Please be aware that the declaration of an emergency in a municipality provides the head of council the ability to take actions and make orders that they consider to be necessary to protect the property, health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the emergency area. These actions or orders cannot be contrary to law. An emergency declaration does not provide a head of council, nor anyone else in a municipality, with any extraordinary authorities that are not otherwise provided for by law. For example, a head of council does not have the authority to order a private business or service to cease operations or to close by virtue to having declared an emergency.

The Township of White River has been in contact with essential businesses operating in White River. They share our concerns with the spread of covid-19 and are doing everything possible to ensure the safety of their workers through the development of covid-19 site and vehicle plans and are working with municipal staff to generate ideas to minimize interactions or interact as safely as possible with front line workers within the community.

"During these unprecedented times, we cannot let our guard down. The actions being taken by everyone to stay home and practice physical distancing are making a difference, but we are not out of the woods yet," said Premier Ford.

We ask that you continue your vigilance in following health guidelines to ensure your safety and that of all residents until this pandemic is behind us. Please continue to direct any concerns or questions to the Township Office. The telephone number is 807-822-2450.

Sincerely,

Mayor and Council for the Township of White River

***"A little consideration, a little thought for others, makes all the difference."*** – Eeyore