



March 20, 2020 – 5:30pm

COVID-19 PANDEMIC UPDATE – CITY OF NELSON

Nelson, BC – The Provincial Government has indicated that the Province of BC has entered a critical phase of this pandemic to flatten the curve of transmission. Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry and Health Minister Adrian Dix both emphasized the importance of physical separation over the next two weeks for all BC residents. They are recommending that people of BC stay home. We, as a community, need to make social distancing our main priority.

The Province issued an additional order today to close restaurants to sit-in patrons, allowing only for take-out and delivery options. Again, the Provincial Health Authority is emphasizing the need to reduce social gatherings and limit contact with others.

“We need to all put in 100% of effort in to social distancing, handwashing and understanding the risk to our vulnerable population.” says Emergency Management Director, Len MacCharles. “As being stressed by the Province, the best thing we can do is stay home and certainly do not visit those with underlying health issues and the elderly. And don’t be afraid to nicely, and I stress nicely, to ask someone to step back if they move too close.”

Please note the following operational updates:

Public Works:

The City of Nelson will be closing off playground and exercise equipment and putting up signs at all City Parks with the following messaging:

- The City of Nelson does not disinfect playground, exercise or park equipment (including tables and benches).
- Always maintain a social distance of at least 2 metres. **This includes children.*
- Supervision of children is highly recommended.
- Users assume any and all risk of park equipment use.

Nelson Hydro:

Nelson Hydro’s commitment to residents during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Our priority is the safety, health and well-being of our employees, customers and the community while ensuring our employees and facilities remain safe during these challenging times.

We will continue to provide the safe and reliable delivery of electricity as an essential service provider. Even though our doors are currently closed to the public, our team is ready to respond and support as needed.

Customers may, in some cases, need to change how they get information about their accounts and how they pay their bills.

How can customers get information about their utility accounts during this time?

The best way that customers can get information about their accounts and balances, is by calling our Customer Service Representatives at (250)352-8206 during business hours or by email at hydroclerk@nelson.ca.

How can I pay my utility bill during this time?

Utility bills are still due on the specified due date. If you are facing challenges with paying your bill, please call us to discuss payment arrangement options available for you.

Customers can currently pay their utility bill in the following ways:

- Through preauthorized equalized monthly payments withdrawal on the 1st or 15th monthly
- Through preauthorized bill payment withdrawals on the 1st or 15th bi-monthly
- At your bank (financial institutions are still open to the public at this time)
- Online Banking / Telephone Banking
- After hours drop boxes at the entrance of City Hall
- Mail in your cheque via Canada Post
- Call in to (250) 352-8206 to pay by credit card

Nelson Transit:

For the next 30 days, starting Saturday, March 21st, the West Kootenay Transit System, which includes Nelson Transit, has implemented rear door boarding to enhance social distancing for drivers and passengers. There is no cost for bus services during this time.

How to board?

- Enter and exit the bus using the rear doors.
- Board the bus, find an open space and maintain social distancing.
- Fares and passes are not required.
- Use extra caution when boarding the bus.

For more information visit bctransit.com/covid-19



Many people in our community have travelled or they (or their family members) will be returning. It is critical that you follow the [requirements](#) of the BC Public Health Officer. Currently, information supports that approximately 90% of all confirmed cases are a result of travel outside of Canada.

To help provide important information to our community, the City of Nelson has developed a dedicated webpage nelson.ca/covid19 that will be updated frequently as new information becomes available. Please sign-up for 'City News' on [NotifyMe](#) to receive automatic updates from the City via text or email.

The City of Nelson relies on Interior Health, BC Public Health, and the Federal Government for information related to the virus itself. If you believe you are exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, please contact your physician, or call the COVID-19 telephone line at 1-888-COVID19, to be assessed or call the testing clinic hotline at (250) 551-7500 to be triaged for testing. **Symptoms of COVID-19 include coughing, fever, sore throat, and difficulty breathing.** These symptoms may not present themselves for up to 14 days, but you may be a carrier of the virus; therefore it is important to follow the guidelines set out by the health experts.

We thank you for doing your part to help maintain a safe and healthy community and for understanding the importance of this evolving situation.

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