



Village of Sayward
Emergency Preparedness Committee

NEWS RELEASE

March 24th, 2020

The Sayward, Emergency Preparedness Committee met via tele-conference on Sunday night at 6:00pm, to discuss and coordinate a unified approach to dealing with the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Our group is comprised of the following departments of The Village of Sayward and The Sayward Valley: SRD EOC, Sayward EPC, ESS, Public Works, Fire Department, RCMP, BC Ambulance Service and the Sayward Medical Clinic.

The Sayward Emergency Preparedness Committee has agreed to meet via tele-conference on a weekly basis as current information is rapid and evolving. In addition, we are in constant e-mail communication as a group to share and disseminate direction and information for the benefit of all our Village and Valley residents.

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with local information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic from the Sayward Emergency Planning Committee.

RCMP

The detachment is closed to the public, until further notice. All front counter services including but not limited to; Civilian Fingerprinting Services, Criminal Record or Police Information Checks and found property will not be conducted until further notice. These changes are being taken as

a preventative measure and do not affect 9-1-1 service or calls to out to the non-emergency police line 250-282-5522 (listen to the prompts). Both of these services continue to be offered as per usual. For the protection of the RCMP members, you may see that they will be responding to your calls for service donning Personal Protective Equipment, which consist of glasses/goggles, 3M mask with filters and gloves.

B.C RCMP Website <http://bc.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/>

Fire Department

Within the Village of Sayward municipal boundaries open burning of garden waste and other materials is not permitted at any time of the year. A small campfire solely for the purpose of cooking or keeping warm is allowed. If you reside in the Valley your area is governed by the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources which still permits open burning in areas under its jurisdiction. The next page offers best practices for safe burning. If the Fire Dept. does have to attend to a call at your property, please ensure you keep at least 2 metres away from any firefighter and give them plenty of extra room to work. Useful information is also available on our website <https://saywardfire.com>

BC Ambulance

We will respond to 911 calls in the event of medical emergency. However, If you are having any of the listed COVID-19 symptoms, please utilize other resources unless you are having trouble breathing. Be aware that you will be asked several screening questions prior to an ambulance coming to your home. In some cases, response may be delayed, or alternatives to ambulance care may be presented. Please do NOT come to the ambulance station as we are closed to the public.

Village Public Works

The Village of sayward has an adequate supply of water treatment chemicals. We also have arranged alternate water treatment staff in place if our works department suffers an illness or must self-isolate.

In conjunction with the EPC and the Sayward Emergency Preparedness Committee, we have decided to close the Playground and Outdoor Fitness Area until further notice to protect the public from accidental exposure.

We have also taken proactive steps to safeguard our public works staff by limiting our exposure to each other in our workplace environment.

Health Clinic

Some prescription refills can be filled by pharmacists without you seeing your primary care provider. This is only for some routine medications that you are on. All other prescriptions must be filled by your primary care provider. The clinic is doing many of these appointments with patients over the telephone during this time. You can call the clinic and book a telephone appointment to speak to the nurse practitioner or physician.

We have re-arranged the clinic to promote social distancing. Please be mindful when coming into the clinic to keep 2 meters away from other members of the public. If you are sick with any respiratory symptoms, please call the clinic and arrange an appointment time. Do not just come in. We will book you in when it is not busy, to avoid potential contact with other people.

Lab days are still every Monday morning from 9-1130. We ask that you only come in for labs if it is urgent, INR testing, all cancer patients receiving treatment, therapeutic medication levels (eg epilepsy medication or digoxin) or your provider has asked you to come in at this time. The laboratories in the hospital are very busy at this time, so we would like to help reduce this by not doing your routine screening at this time. If you have any questions, please call the clinic.

Clinic website <http://saywardclinic.com/>

Resources

Provincial Hotlines that the Public Can Call:

1-888-COVID19

Service providers at this hotline will help answer non-medical questions about travel, social distancing, and what kind of support, resources and assistance is available from provincial and federal governments. The hotline

will be open from 7:30am-8:00pm. People with health related issues should still call 811

811

Is a free-of-charge provincial health information and advice phone line available in BC. This number is operated by HealthLink BC. You can speak to a health service navigator, who can help you find health information and service; or connect you directly with a registered nurse, registered dietitian, or qualified exercise professional or pharmacist.

BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool

<https://covid19.thrive.health>

This tool, developed with the BC Ministry of Health, will help determine whether you may need further assessment or testing for COVID-19. You can complete this assessment for yourself, or on behalf of someone else if they are unable to.

<https://srd.ca/covid-19-coronavirus-update/>

Best Practices for Open Burning

Prepare the site

- Brush piles and windrows must be at least 25 metres from trees and bushes.
- A fireguard 15 metres wide and cleared down to the mineral soil must completely surround the area.
- Windrows cannot be more than 60 metres in length with a minimum eight metre break between each windrow.
- Windrows and brush piles cannot be more than 6 metres wide.
- Parallel windrows must be separated by at least 15 metres.
- To allow for a cleaner burn, ensure that you reduce the amount of soil and dirt in your windrows or brush piles. Clean burning reduces the likelihood of smoke issues and smouldering fires. Smouldering fires can last for months and emerge as a wildfire in warm, dry weather.

Safe burning practices

- Never leave your fire unattended. • Only burn what you can control and follow the conditions of your permit.

- Watch for sparks and burning material that may result in smaller fires. Larger fires can send these sparks over several kilometres, especially when burning in the wind.
- If the wind is gusting over 15 km/hour or increases beyond the limit on your permit, immediately extinguish your fire. \
- Have the tools and equipment listed in your permit available to put out any spot fires that may occur.

After you burn

- Spread or stir the debris to speed up extinguishing the fire. Re-pile unburnt debris to ensure it burns as needed.
- Walk the area and check for heat. Fire can smoulder underground only to reappear under drier conditions as a wildfire.
- Insert a metal probe into the burned area and then feel it for heat to ensure nothing is burning in the ground.
- Water down and extinguish hot spots.
- Carefully inspect the area in the days and weeks after your burn is complete.

How you can help slow and limit the spread of COVID-19

- Increase frequency of hand washing and avoid touching your face.
- Stay home if possible and maintain social distance when outside the home (no handshaking and hugging).
- Self-isolate after travel and if you feel sick.
- Contact the B.C. Nurse Line at 8-1-1 if you might have been exposed to or contracted the virus.
- Seek immediate medical attention if you have a fever, cough or difficulty breathing.

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