

Message from Mayor Rob Keffer:  
COVID-19 update - March 18

BWG's online community continues to thrive and I would like to thank everyone who has read and shared these updates. I encourage you to bear in mind that social media is a double-edged sword – while there are lots of great posts and forums where people are sharing ideas, offering help and providing emotional support, I am still seeing some unsupported rumours that are causing unnecessary fear.

Please get your information on the transmission and incidence of COVID-19 only from official sources like the Health Unit and Ontario Health Ministry. Regarding stock at local stores, we have been in touch with management at Sobeys, Food Basics, Zehr's and No Frills today and have been assured that while there have been some delays due to overwhelming demand, they are continuing to receive product on a regular basis. Please observe any special hours set aside for shopping by those most in need of support.

The Town's Emergency Control Group has been convening daily to address the most critical concerns, review the latest information from other levels of government, and discuss what we need to do to protect both our staff and the residents of our community.

Yesterday we took the step of closing all Town offices, in addition to last week's closure of recreational facilities, in an effort to flatten the curve of the disease by discouraging close contact.

Today's most pressing point of conversation was how to help alleviate the financial pressures that many people are feeling as a result of staying home from work. I have asked our Financial Services department to provide Council with complete details on what the Town can do, and we will share more information with you in the next few days.

For now, I can confirm that we are giving a grace period for water/wastewater utility bill payments – if you need extra time to pay your bill, there will be no penalty or interest applied until the end of the next billing period. Unfortunately, the January-February utility bills have already gone in the mail stating that the deadline for payment is April 17, but we will be advising people that there will be no penalty or interest on bills paid by the beginning of June.

We are also making BWG Transit free until the end of April. We are doing extra sanitization of buses and ask all transit users to practice good handwashing/coughing/sneezing etiquette and to maintain social distancing as much as possible for the protection of transit drivers and one another.

Town staff continue to work remotely and provide as many services as possible by phone or online, or by appointment if a face-to-face interaction is necessary. Lots of information and links to online services are available on our website at [www.townofbwg.com](http://www.townofbwg.com) or call 905-775-5366.

If there is other information I can provide, please contact me at [rkeffer@townofbwg.com](mailto:rkeffer@townofbwg.com).

Best,  
Rob Keffer