

Message from Mayor Rob Keffer:
COVID-19 update – May 7, 2020

If you have been following Premier Ford's updates then you know that, little by little, certain types of businesses and services are being permitted to reopen with strict health and safety guidelines. It's very nice to see that garden centres and nurseries are open in time for Mother's Day.

The three-stage 'Framework for Reopening Our Province' announced last week anticipates that it will take many weeks before all workplaces will be open, but it is very encouraging to see us making progress. A lot of incorrect information has been circulating about this plan so if you have not yet done so, I encourage you to review it yourself:

www.ontario.ca/page/reopening-ontario-after-covid-19

The news from the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit is that we need to proceed very cautiously. There was a significant rise this week in COVID-19 hospitalizations in the Simcoe-Muskoka area, and sadly there has been another death of a resident of the Bradford Valley Care Community. My sincere condolences to the family and friends of this individual.

While we cannot predict when we will see a consistent downward trend in new cases and a subsequent reopening of more services, we are keeping an eye on the information from the province and the health unit. We will be following their direction on when facilities and programs at the Town of BWG can reopen, and in what form.

At this week's Council meeting, we decided that the most responsible action at this time is to cancel all planned events, programs and permits through the end of August. As difficult and disappointing as this is, the safety and health of residents is the most important consideration. We felt it was necessary to make this decision sooner rather than later in order to give organizations and families ample time to make other arrangements, and we were coming to a point where we would not have the time necessary to make these events happen if we didn't make a call one way or the other.

That said, please know that this decision does NOT mean that there is no chance of having any activities this summer. If the province and health unit give us the go ahead to allow some events and public programs before the end of the summer, then we will explore all possibilities for doing so.

Please also be aware that once we are able to open facilities and/or provide some programs, we anticipate that it will take us some time to ramp up. We will need to bring back staff who are on layoff, and in all likelihood we will be directed to reopen gradually, starting with the most critical services first and allowing fewer people than usual into our facilities and programs.

I thank you for your tremendous patience and support throughout the past months and in the months to come. Happy Mother's Day to all of the mothers in BWG!

Best,
Rob Keffer