



*Come for a Visit, Stay for a Lifetime*

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Dear Madawaska Valley residents, businesses and community,

Last week the Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) confirmed the first laboratory-tested positive case of COVID-19 in a Renfrew County resident who has been hospitalized at Pembroke Regional Hospital. The RCDHU press release quoted the Acting Medical Officer of Health for our area:

"We know that confirmed cases represent only a fraction of disease activity in the community. For every 1 confirmed case there are probably 10 cases out in the community and quite possibly 100. The message is clear. COVID-19 is in Eastern Ontario and in Renfrew County," says Dr. Robert Cushman, Acting Medical Officer of Health, Renfrew County and District Health Unit.

**COVID-19 is in Renfrew County.**

**THIS IS NOT A DRILL.**

Returning Snow Birds and all travellers must go straight home and stay home alone for 14 days. Not feeling sick today, does not mean you don't have or carry COVID-19. Your family, friends and community are depending on you to help flatten the curve by stopping the spread of COVID-19.

Seasonal residents and cottagers, please carefully consider the good advice provided by the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association before making a decision to shelter at the cottage. All non-essential businesses in Madawaska Valley are closed. Essential businesses and services are stressed by supply shortages and reduced capacity due to physical distancing and self-isolating. There are not enough Family Doctors for the year-round population and our rural healthcare system has no extra COVID-19 capacity. Life has changed here just as much as it has back home.

During this pandemic, changes have been made so the municipality can continue serving our community and protect the health of our employees and the public. The Municipal office is closed to the public but staff are working and available by phone or email. We are getting ready to hold electronic Council meetings that will be available to the public online. Council has approved a COVID-19 Response Plan, and the Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC) and the CEMC alternate are participating in conference calls with the Provincial Emergency Operations Centre, the County of Renfrew and Public Health. They are also monitoring the spring freshet and the municipality is prepared should spring flooding become an issue.

Council would like to thank everyone who provides essential services to our community. If you are not one of these workers - stay at home. If you must get food or pick up a prescription, please respect others and follow the physical distancing directions provided in local businesses. Remember to wash your hands regularly. If anyone in your household has symptoms or has been exposed to COVID-19, stay home and ask for help. Although we need to stay apart, we are all in this together. Cooperation, compassion and helping others are ways we can keep everyone in our community healthy and strong.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kim Love". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mayor Kim Love  
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