

For Immediate Release

News Release

COVID-19 UPDATE – Town of Edson (April 1st, 2020)

Edson, Alberta, April 1st, 2020 – The Town of Edson held a special meeting of the Emergency Management Advisory Committee last night to discuss various issues surrounding the COVID-19 virus outbreak. This included Council and a limited number of Administration.

An update on the COVID-19 situation was provided to the committee, as well as updates on communication actions taking place and measures being taken administratively to help alleviate some pressures moving forward.

The Committee also received an update on some budgetary measures being considered. More details on that will be released later this afternoon.

Again, the Town of Edson is highlighting the importance of residents following the social/physical distancing guidelines. The Town of Edson has set more strict recommendations than the Province at this time, asking for gatherings to remain at 10 people or less. This is for public spaces such as parks and trails.

Many communities have been forced to declare a Local State of Emergency to help deal with enforcement of these public health restrictions. The Town of Edson has not had to take those steps, however, it does remain an option to assist in enforcement if it's found that residents are not respecting the guidelines set forth.

Playgrounds in Edson remain open to the public at this time as per Provincial recommendations. The Town of Edson would just ask that proper social distancing is taking place and everyone follows guidelines on hygiene, such as washing hands before and after attending playgrounds.

The committee would also like to remind residents of the utility and tax measures being taken at this time. Council has supported these measures, however, they still need official approval at an upcoming Council meeting.

Utility Penalty Deferral - In these extraordinary times, the Town of Edson recognizes that steps need to be taken to help residents and businesses stay on their feet. If approved, this measure would mean no penalties will be applied for non-payment on utility bills received in the months of March through July. While **those payments will still need to be made**, customers will have until the end of 2020 to catch up on those balances. Penalties will be reinstated on the August bill, but for new balances only. This will allow customers to spread out those payments over a number of months if necessary.

Please note that automatic payments for utility and tax accounts will continue unless the account holder contacts the finance department with further instructions.

Tax Due Date Adjustment - Council is also looking at pushing back the property tax payment due date. Tax notices will still go out as normal, however, the payment deadline will now be September 30th, 2020.

The COVID-19 situation does have a profound impact on the Town's budget. Council is also taking a very close look at finances to ensure proper steps are taken to maintain an acceptable level of service while being fiscally responsible to our taxpayers in this difficult time. More details will be forthcoming as Council reviews the budget at an upcoming meeting. As mentioned, some of those initial steps will be announced this afternoon.

The Town of Edson is committed to our public and will continue to review information as it comes in and make decisions in the best interest of our community. We ask everyone to stay informed locally, and with the various other levels of government.

Thank you for doing your part to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Be safe!

Edson – www.edson.ca/covid

Alberta – www.alberta.ca/covid19

Canada – www.canada.ca/covid19

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