



Media Release

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Update #2: COVID-19 Pandemic

Regional municipalities declare State of Local Emergency

GPREP's six partner municipalities, including the City of Grande Prairie, County of Grande Prairie, the Towns of Beaverlodge, Wembley, and Sexsmith, and the Village of Hythe, have each declared a State of Local Emergency to support the Province of Alberta's efforts to combat the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"After assessing the current situation, we have determined it is necessary for the partner municipalities to make this declaration in order to enact certain provisions including those that will allow us to ensure we can maintain access to supplies in the region," said Dan Lemieux, Acting Director of Emergency Management for GPREP. "The declaration allows us to exercise extraordinary powers outlined in the *Alberta Emergency Management Act*, which we will be using to develop a plan to support local retailers in managing distribution of goods and ensuring an adequate supply of food and necessary household items now and into the coming weeks."

Once declared, a State of Local Emergency provides municipalities the following powers if necessary:

- Control or prohibit travel
- Distribute essential goods, restore essential facilities, and maintain/coordinate emergency medical, welfare, or other essential services
- Price fix for food, clothing, fuel, equipment, medical supplies, or other essential supplies and the use of any property, services, resources or equipment for the duration of the State of Local Emergency
- Order the evacuation of persons and the removal of livestock and personal property that is or may be affected by a disaster and decide for the adequate care and protection of those persons or livestock and of the personal property
- Authorize the entry into any building or on any land, without warrant, by any person in the course of implementing an emergency plan or program

"We understand the questions and concerns residents from our region are raising as the global COVID-19 pandemic evolves," said Lemieux. "This is an unprecedented situation that requires extraordinary measures. We are in close contact with Alberta Health Services and working with them in our efforts to keep our community safe and provide the best advice to our local elected officials so that they can make informed and effective decisions."

Residents are reminded to follow the advice of federal and provincial health officials including practicing social distancing.

“Social distancing is a key strategy adopted by the Province to “flatten the curve,” which is basically trying to reduce the number of people contracting COVID-19 at one time so we don’t overwhelm the healthcare system,” said Lemieux. “We encourage residents in the region to stay at home as much as possible, but at the same time look out for each other. Check on your neighbours, the seniors in the community, and other people who are considered high risk and see what you can do to help them while still limiting contact. We are all in this together and, as a community, we have many resources to help support each other through this difficult time.”

Residents should use the Government of Alberta website as their primary source of information on the government’s response and health measures by visiting www.alberta.ca/covid19.

Residents are also encouraged to check municipal websites for information on municipality specific announcements such as changes to services and events:

- City of Grande Prairie – www.cityofgp.com
- County of Grande Prairie – www.countygp.ab.ca
- Town of Beaverlodge – www.beaverlodge.ca
- Town of Sexsmith – www.sexsmith.ca
- Town of Wembley – www.wembley.ca
- Village of Hythe – www.hythe.ca

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