

COVID-19 MESSAGE FROM ISC BC REGION

UPDATE #36 / May 6, 2020

Good Afternoon,

The Province of British Columbia and much of Canada are signaling a new chapter in the response to COVID-19 is soon to begin. We imagine the decisions made by other jurisdictions and the evolving recommendations of health officials, will help in your deliberations for the next steps for your communities. We want you to know that we will respect your decisions as you move forward. We truly are all in this together and continue to focus on the well-being and safety of you and your members.

UPDATE

We continue to be asked how communities can pay for the increased security measures they have in place.

The **Indigenous Community Support Fund (ICSF)** gives communities the ability to fund according to their priorities and needs. It can, for example, provide support for:

- Goods to community members who are in preventative isolation or quarantine;
- Support for Elders;
- Support for children: learning packages (school supplies, workbooks, educational flashcards, etc.);
- Security costs and more

Security costs would be eligible under the Indigenous Community Support Fund as a preparedness measure. Where possible, it is recommended that First Nations consult with law enforcement and health professionals for guidance regarding how measures can best address public health objectives.

While the amount provided to each community takes into account a base amount of \$50,000 per community, the total population residing in community (based on 2016 Census population), and is adjusted for remoteness and Community Wellbeing Index scores, the flexibility of how to spend the allocation rests with First Nation leadership.

We have also heard your concerns that the funding allocated is insufficient to meet this need. Be assured we are raising the complexities of the BC situation in hopes of addressing your questions and concerns.

Circuit Riders

The safety of your water systems continues to be a shared concern during these challenging times. We want to assure you that the Circuit Riders are still available to provide advice and guidance to your water operators.

I'm fine, thanks.



What I really mean is...

I'm not feeling like myself right now and I'm worried about my family's health and what's going on with my work and I'm really not coping and I need someone to talk to.

#GetReal
mentalhealthweek.ca



Circuit Riders are on stand-by 24/7 for on-call telephone emergency services and are available to provide on-site support to address operational emergencies related to drinking water or wastewater operations. First Nations can also access their Senior Engineer or Capital Management Officer for assistance related to any critical infrastructure required to support the health and safety of community members.

Questions regarding the continued services provided by the Circuit Rider team should be directed to aadnc.bccicrtp.aandc@canada.ca.

PARTNER INFORMATION

Construction Site Protocols

As governments look to lift restrictions, on-reserve construction projects stalled by COVID-19 may be resuming. The Canadian Construction Association has posted **COVID-19 - Standardized Protocols For All Canadian Construction Sites** which outline the best practices in order to maintain the health and safety of all workers required to perform duties during the COVID-19 crisis.

The protocols include prevention, detection and response measures to help minimize the impacts of the crisis and apply recommendations and best practices from federal, provincial, and municipal public health authorities to construction site procedures.

Contractors and consultants should be aware of these additional safety requirements, and the new requirements should form part of the discussions they are having with First Nations for any project moving towards construction.

Mental Health and Sleep

In case you missed it, the First Nations Health Authority has posted **Ten Tips for Sleeping Well During Troubled Times**. Dr. Shannon McDonald, FNHA Deputy Chief Medical Officer shares why sleep is part of maintaining good health and strong immune system. She says it's also important for protecting our mental health. "Our brains work better and we have better judgement, more self-control, and enhanced creativity. We can also be more patient and positive, and be better able to manage our moods and emotions," she said.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

We believe we are better when we share our knowledge. We are pleased to share resources and updates being offered by communities:

- Stó:lō Nation posted to both **Facebook** and **Twitter** about their #StayHome campaign which has been profiled in the Chilliwack Progress:

As the situation in BC continues to improve, it still remains important to protect our Elders and others who are vulnerable by maintaining social distancing and avoiding gathering. #StayHome

- **Shackan Indian Band** posted about a medicine wheel colouring challenge to mark mental health week.
- **ᑭᐱᑭᐱᑭ** posted about the opening of the St. Eugene Resort Golf Course with restrictions on May 22, 2020.
- **Westbank First Nation @westbankfn:**

This week is Emergency Preparedness Week! A reminder that flood & fire season could be right around the corner. Take some time to create a plan & make sure you and your family feel prepared for what could come. <https://t.co/DT1G68v2Oc>

RESPONSE TO COVID-19 SURVEY

Share your ideas and input!

B.C. is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic with a co-ordinated province-wide approach. Our priority is to protect British Columbians and ensure we can effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 questionnaire topics include:

- Responses to government measures, actions, and decisions
- Current levels of concern
- Personal and job impacts
- Use and need of information sources

Share your feedback by completing the online questionnaire.

QUESTION OF THE DAY

What support is available for First Nations communities and members preparing for spring flooding?

With warmer weather and melting snow packs there is still a risk of localized flooding in some areas. For First Nations communities and members preparing for spring flooding, our provincial partners have put together [guidelines for Flood response during the COVID-19 event](#). It includes best practices for sandbag production while practicing safe physical distancing.

Emergency Management BC (EMBC) is the first point of contact for all emergencies including flooding. Should your community be threatened please contact EMBC's 24/7 emergency line at: at 1-800-663-3456. EMBC Regional Offices are also conducting virtual seasonal readiness meetings. Contact your [regional office](#) for more information.

We appreciate that some communities have already experienced localized flooding, a significant challenge to manage above pandemic planning. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you are concerned about potential flooding.

The following steps should be implemented now as preventative measures:

- Clear all ditches; culverts in particular major stream and creek crossings need to be clear of debris
- Draw down natural reservoirs for irrigation purposes, in preparation to receive melt water from the upstream watershed
- Check conditions of flood protection works including dikes and erosion control structures
- Begin a monitoring process and review any emergency response plans
- Listen to the various provincial reports and be aware of the potential for flooding in your area.
- Review your evacuation processes and develop plans for how to isolate people that have been evacuated; local commercial accommodations should be open and would be good to discuss / rehearse a process with a local venue
- Discuss how typical flood procedures / practices would be carried out in the context of maintaining a two meter separation between individuals.

Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc has also compiled information and resources on personal flood preparedness on their [Facebook page](#) including the need to prepare a grab-and-go-bag in case you have to evacuate.

SERVICE CANADA OUTREACH

Service Canada is taking steps to ensure everyone can connect and get the full benefit of the Government of Canada supports available in these challenging times. To support access to critical programs and services for clients, including First Nations members, without access to technology, Service Canada Community Outreach and Liaison Service are available to offer alternate service delivery methods that will continue to support accessing critical programs, services and benefits.

 **1-877-631-2657**

NATIONAL INFORMATION

- **Practical advice, articles and information to help you #GetReal about how you really feel**
- **Taking care of your mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic**
- **Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Prevention and risks**
- The Government of Canada has made announcements regarding financial assistance for those who will be impacted during these unprecedented times – these individuals and business are encouraged to apply for assistance. You can find further information on how to apply for financial or economic support at:
Canada.ca/coronavirus and **Questions and Answers on the Canada Emergency Response Benefit**.
- For a great description of what flattening the curve means, consider watching **Prime Minister Trudeau's video tweet**
- **Public Health Agency of Canada**
- **Resources for Canadian Businesses**
- **Transport Canada – COVID-19 measures, updates, and guidance issued by Transport Canada**

USEFUL LINKS

- **Kids Help Phone**
- Economic measures to help stabilize the economy during this challenging period. As information is rapidly changing we strongly encourage you to visit the **federal** and **provincial financial supports** websites often for the latest information.
- First Nations Health Authority – **Information for community leaders**
- **COVID-19 BC Support App and Self-Assessment Tool**
The app will let you receive the latest updates, trusted resources, and alerts. The Self-Assessment Tool is built in.
- With the help of BCFC, the First Nations Public Service Secretariat has posted a **COVID-19 Resources for All BC Individuals**.

REGIONAL CONTACTS

We've set up a dedicated email for any non-health COVID-19-related questions and requests:
aadnc.iscbccovid19.aandc@canada.ca

