



## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

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### First Confirmed Case of COVID-19 in Wetaskiwin Region

March 23, 2020

(Wetaskiwin, Alberta) – The Wetaskiwin Region saw its first confirmed case of COVID-19 this past weekend, [according to Alberta Statistics](#). While the patient in question is currently isolated in Edmonton, there remains a risk that the virus was transmitted to others before this case was confirmed.

The protection of public health remains a top priority for the City and County of Wetaskiwin. Both organizations are working together to help protect the health of everyone in the region by remaining updated on each other's efforts, as well as ensuring the delivery of consistent and timely information throughout the region on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

"It is very important that everyone practice social distancing at this time," said City of Wetaskiwin Mayor Tyler Gandam. "If you feel sick, stay home. Call upon friends or family to help with grocery runs. Do everything possible to help prevent the spread so our healthcare system doesn't get overwhelmed."

While work has begun on developing a vaccine, it is a lengthy process and may take a year or more until one is ready for public distribution. The only protective measure that people can take at this time is self-isolating whenever possible, practicing impeccable hygiene, and remaining firm on social distancing. These efforts are proven to assist with flattening the curve, which means spreading out the rate of infection to help keep our healthcare system within capacity.

"It is imperative to follow the direction of our Provincial Health Authority at this time. We should all be willing to stay home and only go out for essential items like medication and groceries," said County of Wetaskiwin Reeve Terry Van de Kraats. "We should be ready to protect the health of our loved ones as much as possible. We should be ready to protect our community members as much as possible by distancing ourselves. We should be ready to maintain connection with others via technology, such as email, phone, and text. Let's work together as much as possible to get through this time in our history."

To help protect the health and safety of our communities, the province has set up a number of resources which are summarized below:

- [Alberta COVID-19 Information Page](#)
- [How to prevent the spread](#)
- [Support for employers and employees](#)
- [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#)
- [How to self-isolate](#)

Locally available information on COVID-19 can be found at the following websites:

- [www.wetaskiwin.ca/covid19](http://www.wetaskiwin.ca/covid19) (City of Wetaskiwin)
- <https://www.county.wetaskiwin.ab.ca/> (County of Wetaskiwin)

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For more information please contact:

**City of Wetaskiwin**

Ren Goode

Communications Manager

780.361.4417

**County of Wetaskiwin**

Sharon Radis

Communications Officer

780.361.6220

## **Backgrounder**

Here are ways you can protect yourself and others during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **If you're feeling unwell:**

- Self-isolate immediately for 14 days. Do not leave your home.
- Ask friends and family to help ensure you have all required necessities during this time. [The City also has a Facebook page set up](#) to assist those who need supplies but cannot leave their homes.
- Do not visit a medical centre or the hospital.
- Take the [online COVID-19 Self-Assessment](#) if you think you may have the virus. Instructions will follow.

### **If you are running necessary errands:**

- Shop during slow times
- Wipe down any cart or basket you are using beforehand
- Remain at least 6 feet away from others at all times
- Do not touch your face at all while shopping
- Wipe down each product before storing it at home
- Thoroughly wash your hands upon returning home, as well as after putting away items.

### **If you see an establishment not complying with the province's advisories:**

- Call Environmental Public Health at 1-877-360-6366.

### **If you or your children are struggling to cope with the stress of the current situation:**

- Call the Mental Health Help Line at 1-877-303-2642
- Children can call the Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868