

Ermineskin Newsletter March 27, 2020

MASKWACIS DECLARES A STATE OF EMERGENCY







March 24th, 2020 Maskwacis, AB— The Four Nations chiefs declared a State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the Neyaskweyahk Okimaw Kamik Chief Craig Makinaw, Chief Vernon Saddleback of Samson Cree Nation, Chief Irvin Bull of Louis Bull, and Proxy Chief Bradley Rabbit of Montana Cree Nation held a press conference with media to give their declaration, it was read by invited former Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild, also in attendance was Alberta Regional Chief of the Assembly of First Nations Marlene Poitras.

~We have declared this State of Emergency based upon our inherent and Treaty authority. We are calling upon the Government of Canada to uphold the provisions of Treaty No.6 specifically the Medicine Chest Clause, the Famine and Pestilence Clauses. Our recognized Treaty right to Health is supported through Article 24 of the UN Declaration of the

Rights of Indigenous Peoples.~ Excerpt from the declaration

After signing the declaration the floor was opened up to questions by the Maskwacis citizens watching online via Facebook live, which had over 12,000 viewers, it was also broadcast live on Hawk radio. One of the questions asked, "What will be implemented with declaring a State of Emergency?"

Chief Craig Makinaw answered the question "As you're aware the chiefs spoke on the different services that we need, especially with buildings, medical doctors, supplies so that's why this declaration is being done today, so that those services will be there for our people. Cause, right now as we all know those services are not there, we are doing this to protect our people, so if this happens we will be ready."

Articles and Photos by Tara Cutarm

ABOUT CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19)



WHAT IT IS

COVID-19 is an illness caused by a coronavirus.

Human coronaviruses are common and are typically associated with mild illnesses, similar to the common cold.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms may be very mild or more serious. They may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to the virus







COUGH

DIFFICULTY BREATHING

HOW IT IS SPREAD

Coronaviruses are most commonly SPREAD from an infected person through:

- respiratory droplets when you cough ог sneeze
- close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands
- touching something with the virus on it, then touching your eyes, nose or mouth before washing your hands

These viruses are not known to spread through ventilation systems or through water.

PREVENTION

The best way to prevent the spread of infections is to:



- wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, especially with unwashed hands



avoid close contact with people who are sick



- when coughing or sneezing:
 - cover your mouth and nose with your arm or tissues to reduce the spread of germs



immediately dispose of any tissues you have used into the garbage as soon as possible and wash your hands afterwards



clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as toys, electronic devices and doorknobs.



stay home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others

IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS

If you have SYMPTOMS of COVID-19 - fever, cough, or difficulty breathing:

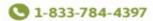


- stay home to avoid spreading it to others
 - if you live with others, stay in a separate room or keep a 2-metre distance



- call ahead before you visit a health care professional or call your local public health authority
 - tell them your symptoms and follow their instructions
- if you need immediate medical attention. call 911 and tell them your symptoms.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CORONAVIRUS:









Public Health Agence de la santé Agency of Canada publique du Canada

Canadä

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) VULNERABLE POPULATIONS AND COVID-19

While diseases can make anyone sick, some Canadians are more at risk of getting an infection and developing severe complications due to their health, social and economic circumstances.

Organizations, staff and volunteers play an important role in helping to prevent these populations from getting or spreading the COVID-19 virus. Start by sharing simple things they can do to help keep themselves and others healthy, guide them to help if they develop any signs and symptoms and learn ways help care for sick clients recovering from COVID-19.



Vulnerable populations may include:

Anyone who is:

- An older adult
- At risk due to underlying medical conditions (e.g. heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer)
- At risk due to a compromised immune system from a medical condition or treatment (e.g. chemotherapy)

Anyone who has:

- Difficulty reading, speaking, understanding or communicating
- Difficulty accessing medical care or health advice
- Difficulty doing preventive activities, like frequent hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes
- Ongoing specialized medical care or needs specific medical supplies
- Ongoing supervision needs or support for maintaining independence
- Difficulty accessing transportation
- Economic barriers
- Unstable employment or inflexible working conditions
- Social or geographic isolation, like in remote and isolated communities
- Insecure, inadequate, or nonexistent housing conditions

COVID-19 Update from MHS CEO Randy Littlechild, and our Physicians Dr. Driese and Dr. Ali. If you are concerned or may require screening please call (780) 585-2266. There is also a link for self assessment on AHS website follow the link: https://myhealth.alberta.ca/.../Pa.../COVID-Self-Assessment.aspx



MASKWACIS HEALTH SERVICES

Box 100 Maskwacis, Alberta T0C 1N0 Telephone: 780-585-3830 Fax: 780-585-2203 **COVID-19 INFORMATION**

HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD

Prevention starts with awareness. Be informed on how you can protect yourself and others from novel coronavirus:

- Self-isolate if you're feeling sick
- Wash your hands frequently
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Avoid touching your face

Concerns about your health? Call Health Link 811.

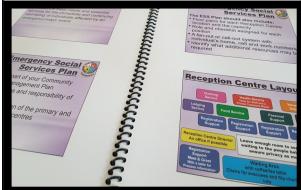
alberta.ca/covid19



March 11, 2020 - Ermineskin Cree Nation employees taking First Nations Emergency Social Services certification.

Over 50 employees attended the ESS training certification, the training offered staff skills and protocols to implement for emergency social services during an emergency situation in the community.

Alberta Emergency Management Training





March 19, 2020 Ermineskin Prepares

The Ermineskin Cree Nation leadership has initiated several coordinated efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Leadership engaged protocol and received guidance and support from elders through ceremony.

The leadership has also been meeting with Emergency officials in regards to necessary steps in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. The primary focus is to continue essential services for our nation and keeping the risk low for the safety of employees and citizens.

It has been announced that the Ermineskin Emergency Operations Plan has been activated as of March 16, 2020.

ECN core Emergency Operations team meets regularly and will continue as needed.

ECN Core Emergency Operations team is comprised of:

- Director of Emergency Management- Greg Minde
- Assistant Director of Emergency Management
 Richard Covote.
- Emergency Operations Center Manager Josh Littlechild
- Health -Maskwacis Health Services



- Infrastructure, Industry, Tech Services, Proper ty Management, Public Works
- Finance, IT & Communications
- Personnel, Tribal Services, Social Services,
- RCMP, Fire & Disaster Services, Security
- Council, Admin and more

The nation will continue to provide the citizens with updates for the community as new information arrives.

Hawk Radio Announcement Chief Addresses the Community



I know we are all concerned about the health and safety of everyone in our community as we face the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are all aware that our citizens of Ermineskin Cree Nation along with the rest of the world are faced with a serious pandemic that is affecting several key areas specific to the health and safety of our Nation citizens.

We would like to assure our citizens we are making it our top priority to address the safety our most vulnerable populations; which includes our children, Elders as well as those that have underlying health issues.

It should be noted that those underlying health issues include diabetes, severe and environmental allergies, high blood pressure, heart conditions, respiratory issues and heavy smokers which are a cause of concern for many families that are affected.

The ECN citizens should know that, on March 11, 2020 ECN department directors and managers underwent First Nations Emergency Management Certification.

We also established our Emergency Operations Committee (EOC) which is continuing to active-

ly coordinate and implement the Emergency Management Plan; they have been conducting daily briefings which include regular contact with Indian Affairs and the Alberta Management Agency. Greg Minde, Ermineskin Director of Emergency Management participates in the Maskwacis EOC briefings daily; where he then updates our Ermineskin EOC team.

Rest Assured, we are actively engaged in emergency management for our nation. We are

monitoring the status of the pandemic within our health regions and following best practices to safeguard our citizens.

I make clear directive for all ECN citizens to follow Safety measures and protocols.

In Closing, it is important that we remain collectively calm and that we share in the responsibility to ensure that we are making safe choices that keep us all healthy.

I cannot stress enough; we all must adhere to the strictest of guidelines when it comes to social (physical) distancing, self-isolation and sanitization as we cannot place ourselves, our children and our Elders at risk. Remember, our Elders are the most vulnerable population among those with underlying health issues.

It is important to have faith in our beliefs and know it is also important to remain positive, and know this too, will pass. Other countries are coming out of this, and we will too, as long as we stay diligent and work together at keeping our citizens safe.

Ekosi maka.

Ermineskin Cree Nation Administrator Update on ECN's COVID -19 Pandemic Response

Tanisi

The Ermineskin Cree Nation Administration and Leadership team have been working consistently to address immediate needs of our citizens as a result to the current COVID-19 pandemic. The emergency response includes the following precautions and measures to support our citizen's:

Most ECN Programs and Services have closed, while others are working from home, to ensure the safety of our employees and citizens, with the exception of essential services

Administration is open with adjusted hours from 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM. Monday and Wednesday.

Essential Services in areas such as Health, Fire, Police, Finance, Housing, Food Bank, Water Delivery and Garbage pickup will operate as needed.

Housing service calls will be limited to ONLY those regarding no heat, no water, and sewer back up issues.

Food Bank Services require appointments as no walk-in will be accepted at this time.

Our citizen's received distribution to help them to obtain supplies, and food as needed for their families.

Our Elders were also provided with Elders relief assistance (for 60 and older)

External organizations such as local businesses have also implemented their safety and risk management plans to integrate pandemic preparedness to COVID-19

Public facilities have been closed and ALL public events have been cancelled.

For safety measures, disinfection and sanitization of ECN facilities has been made a priority.

ECN Hunters were deployed to harvest and

gather meat for our Elders and families in need.

Please bear in mind, things are subject to change dependent upon the pandemic situation.

To keep informed, look for updates and announcements on our Ermineskin social media, newsletter and also our website. A listing of the Ermineskin Emergency Contact Numbers is also available for the public. It will be posted around the community and available on our website.

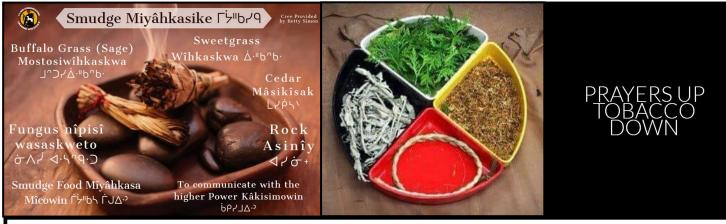
In closing, the ECN Administration will continue to work closely with the EOC team; in striving to provide for our citizens the essential services during this time. **There will be more supports to come**.

I pray for our community and that we hold strong in Maskwacis. Do take care, be well... and be safe.

Hai hai-Geraldine Hill

Administrator Geraldine Hill gives an update on Hawk Radio March 23, 2020 9:45 am





Lawyer, former Chief Dr. Wilton Littlechild tells the Youth to be safe and take precautions during the COVID-19 Pandemic

"There is an important element of the Cree Nation, the Cree have our own way, of our customs and traditions. We have traditional practices we have traditional medicines, we have traditional ceremonies they're not being considered as important. But, I want the general public to know, and especially our youth as well to know that they are important. Yes, we have a health crisis. Yes, we have an economic crisis. But, we should also be saying...Yes, we have a spiritual and cultural crisis. Because that's where a solution lies. That's where treatment is available for the Cree Peoples. Who have always been willing to share with others. I won't go into detail about the use of our traditional medicines, which have been effective already with persons who have been impacted by the corona virus, in other words, lives have been saved already. I want to thank our prayer warriors. Every day, every morning and throughout the day our spiritual leaders our elders and warriors are offering thanksgiving and prayer for everybody not just for Maskwacis. And that element, the spiritual element of the holistic view of health has to be engaged if we are going to succeed at a more faster pace than we are going." - Dr. Wilton Littlechild



ECN COVID-19 UPDATES

DR. WILTON LITTLECHILD

To Our Youth...There is a message directly to you, the young people.
You heard your leaders, listen....Listen to their message, that this is a serious issue.

And you need to take care of yourself....Be mindful of others....Pay attention to your parents, the elders and leaders who are advising you to be careful.



March 24, 2020 at Maskwacis Press Conference

What support is available at this time?

The leadership, along with Ermineskins Emergency Operations Center Management are working on several projects to help meet the current needs as well as any future needs that may arise from the COVID-19 pandemic. Supplies have been ordered to assist those that require food and sanitary needs. In the following weeks Kits and Hampers will be given on a priority basis when they arrive and are ready for distribution. Hunters have also been sent

out to gather meat for our elders and those in need, the meat will be distributed when it is ready and packaged. Pigeon Lake, Smallboy Camp and Buck Lake are also being included in the Emergency Planning, where it is possible to do so. They are also encouraged to obtain assistance in their regional areas as they qualify for those supports.

PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL SUPPORTS FOR OFF RESERVE



Hours: 7:30 am to 8 pm (open Monday to Friday, closed statutory holidays)

Toll free: <u>1-877-644-9992</u> Email: <u>css.ascc@gov.ab.ca</u>

Income Support - How to apply

Apply online or in person for money to pay for basic expenses like food, clothing and shelter.

cupe.ca/canada-emergency-response-benefit

Canada Emergency Response Benefit

Immediate relief for Albertans affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Alberta government will provide immediate financial relief to Alberta's families and vulnerable populations.

Emergency isolation support

Eligible working Albertans can receive a onetime <u>emergency isolation support payment</u> of \$1,146 if they:

o experienced total or significant loss of income as a result of having to self-isolate, or are the sole caregiver of a dependent who is self-isolating, and

have no other source of compensation, such as workplace sick leave benefits or federal employment insurance benefits

Utility payment deferral

- Residential customers can defer electricity and natural gas bill payments for the next 90 days to ensure no one will be cut off, regardless of the service provider.
- This program is available to Albertans who are experiencing financial hardship as a direct result of COVID-19. For example, those who have lost their employment or had to leave work to take care of an ill family member.

Call your utility provider directly to arrange for a 90-day deferral on all payments.

Learn more about the <u>90-day utility payment defer-</u> ral (PDF, 128 KB)

Student loans repayment deferral

We are implementing a six-month, interest free, moratorium on Alberta student loan payments for all Albertans in the process of repaying these loans.

Alberta Student Loan repayments will be paused for

6 months, beginning March 30, 2020.

Interest will not accrue during this period. This mirrors the approach of the Canada Student Loans Program. This mirrors the approach of the <u>Canada Student Loans Program</u>.

• Students do not need to apply for the repayment pause.

Banks and credit unions

ATB financial customers

Personal banking customers can apply for a deferral on their ATB loans, lines of credit and mortgages for up to 6 months.

Federal government programs

Albertans may also be eligible for financial supports through the federal government:

Employment Insurance sickness benefits

• Provides up to 15 weeks of income replacement for eligible Albertans who are unable to work due to illness, injury or quarantine (self-isolation).

One-week waiting period is waived for people in selfisolation.

Emergency Care Benefit (launching April 2020)

Provides up to 15 weeks of \$900 bi-weekly payments to workers without paid sick leave (or similar workplace accommodation) who are sick, quarantined or forced to stay home to care for children.

Canada Child Benefit

Eligible parents will receive \$300 more per child with their regular May CCB payment.

GST rebate increase

Provides low- and modest-income Albertans with a onetime special payment in May of up to \$400 for single people and \$600 for couples.

NHS Announcement

Neyaskweyahk Human Services is implementing the social distancing practice and also operating in conjunction with Ermineskin Cree Nation's Emergency Operations Center plan. NHS will be working with clientele on an emergency based services, case managers have created Budget and Decision (B&D's) for our clientele for the following months; April and May 2020.

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES AND EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY,
NIES WILL BE:

• LIMITING THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN OFFICE TO 5
PEOPLE MAX.

• NIIS IS FOLLOWING ERMINESKIN CREE NATIONS
EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN.

• HOURS OF OPERATION WILL BE REDUCED TO MONDAYS
AND WEDNESDAYS 1:00 TO 8:00 RM

NHS Emergency Contacts: Angel Smallboy- (780)360-9602 Penny Roan- (780)360-6016 Loralyn Cutarm- (780)335-5494



Please
Be
Advised
NHS
Office
Hours
1:00PM - 3:00PM
Monday
and
Wednesday



Distance yourself at least 2 metres (6 feet) away

from other people

APRIL 1ST, FROM 10:00AM - 3:00PM,

Neyaskweyahk Human Services will be distributing

MID MONTH

NHS Cheques

Location: NHS Office

WE WILL ONLY
BE LETTING IN
10 PEOPLE AT
A TIME TO
MINIMIZE RISK.







STAY HOME. WASH HANDS. SAVE LIVES.



ECN COVID-19 UPDATES

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

ECN has undertaken a drive to spread social awareness about the importance of the basic needs in our community during this time.

Our initiative can only be sustained with the help of volunteers; individuals who will be ready to spare a couple of hours for this cause.

We are asking for volunteers who are willing to -Cook -Home care aides -People willing to drive -Helpers to distribute food, goods, etc.

Please send me your name, position volunteering for, and contact info. Also if you know of anybody, who isn't an ECN employee who would like to volunteer, please ask them to forward their information as well.



Shawnna Houle Personnel Assistant

CONTACT MONDAY WEDNESDAY (1PM-3PM) (780) 585-3741

TRIBAL SERVICES UPDATE

IN ACCORDANCE WITH ECN POLICY AND PROCEDURES, ESPECIALLY AT A TIME LIKE THIS

IN ACCORDANCE WITH ECN POLICY AND PROCEDURES, ESPECIALLY AT A TIME LIKE THIS RULES MUST BE FOLLOWED. THERE HAS BEEN MORE THAN 100+ REQUESTS FROM OUR ECN MEMBERSHIP FOR EMERGENCY SUPPORT IN THE PAST FEW DAYS; WE WILL BE PUTTING THE ASSISTANCE ON HOLD, UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. FOR THOSE THAT HAVE SUBMITTED PLEASE BE PATIENT AS YOUR APPLICATIONS ARE REVIEWED.

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY THE FOLLOWING PRIORITY LEVELS ARE IMPLEMENTED:

PRIORITY (TRIAGE):

PRIORITY 1 - OFF RESERVE MEMBERS WHO HAVE NEVER
APPLIED FOR ASSISTANCE

PRIORITY 2 - OFF RESERVE MEMBERS WHO HAVE APPLIED PREVIOUSLY & REQUIRE EMERGENCY RENT OR UTILITIES PRIORITY 3 - ELDERS

PRIORITY 4 - ON RESERVE MEMBERSHIP (CASE BY CASE)
INELIGIBLE CLIENTS: INCOME SUPPORT, EMPLOYED AND
CLIENTS WHO ARE AT MAX BENEFITS.

Support Services is ONE agency of assistance, members are encouraged to seek out their local Alberta Works, Food Banks, Health center, Friendship Center, etc. for additional emergency

Christina Aguilar Sanchez Phone: 780-585-3741 Ext. 271 Toll Free: 1-866-585-3941



COVID-19: Financial Resources for Individuals and Families

Mortgage Payment Deferral

Canadians are eligible to recieve up to a **6-month payment deferral for mortgages**. Contact your bank for more information
or to apply for deferred payments.

Income Tax Deadline Extended

The return filing due date has been deferred until June 1, 2020.

All taxpayers are permitted to defer, until after August 31, 2020, the payment of any income tax amounts owing.

Moratorium on Student Loan Payments

A six-month interest-free moratorium has been placed on the repayment of Canada Student Loans for all individuals currently in the process of repaying these loans.

El Sickness Benefit

The one-week waiting period for individuals in quarantine, and the requirement to provide a medical certificate to access EI sickness benefits, has been waived.

Emergency Care Benefit

This benefit will provide up to \$900 bi-weekly, for up to 15 weeks toworkers taking care of a family member who is sick and parents required to stay home from work to care for children.

Emergency Support Benefit

This benefit will offer support to workers, including self-employed Canadians, who are not eligible for El and who are facing unemployment.

Increasing the Canada Child Benefit

The maximum annual Canada Child Benefit (CCB) payment amounts will be increased by \$300 per child beginning in May 2020.

One-Time Additional GST Payment

The government will double the maximum annual GSTC payment amounts for the 2019-20 benefit year.

from Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan: Support for Canadians and Businesses





Housing service calls will be limited to ONLY
-No heat
-No water
-Sewer back up issues.
Septic Cleaning will continue as usual

THE HOUSING DEPARTMENT WILL BE CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE WITH THE EXCEPTION OF EMERGENCY SERVICE EMERGENCY SERVICE NUMBER: SERVICE CLERK JENNIFER LEE (780) 360-2546

ERMINESKIN SECURITY

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY:
STAFF WILL BE DOING ROTATION
SHIFTS.
THIS WEEK OF MARCH 23RD MANAGER
WILL BE WORKING FROM HOME. AND
WILL BE IN OFFICE NEXT WEEK.
YOU CAN STILL CONTACT KAROYLE
BY CELLPHONE OR EMAIL.

Enjoy your quality time with family at this time. Karoyle Weinhandl Security Manager

Security Manager Karoyle Weinhandl Ermineskin Security (780) 585-2004 or (780) 335-3725



ECN COVID-19 UPDATES

No Wipes Down the Pipes

Even if a product says it is "flushable" ...
Unless it is toilet paper, it should not be flushed!

- Diapers (including cloth, cotton, disposable, or plastic)
- Flushable, disposable, cleaning, or baby wipes
- Paper towels, cloth towels, or any type of rag
- Feminine hygiene products
- reminine nyglene produc



Place the items listed above in a trash can

Putting these items down toilets may plug sewers and cause raw sewage to back up into YOUR HOME

PLEASE DO NOT FLUSH THESE
Non-biodegradable products, as they
MAY CAUSE SEWAGE BACKUPS
Thank you for your cooperation

Ermineskin Tech Services and Ermineskin Property Management

ECN COVID-19 UPDATES

WHAT A QUOTE:

66

The virus doesn't move, people move it, we stop moving, the virus stops moving, the virus dies.

It's that simple

99





ECN EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Maskwacis RCMP (780) 585-3767

Ermineskin Fire Hall (780) 312-3145 or (780) 585-4589

Maskwacis Ambulance (780) 585-4000

Maskwacis Health Services (780) 585-2266

Maskwacis Mobile Mental Health (780) 362-2150

Maskwacis Victims Services (780) 361-7494

Ermineskin Women's Shelter (780) 585-4444

Ermineskin Security (780) 585-2004 or (780) 335-3725

ECN Administrator (780) 361-5930

Child Services (780) 335-4116

Food Bank (780) 360-9384

NEP (780) 335-8174

NHS (780) 360-9602

Property Management Service Call:

Jennifer Lee (780) 360-2546

Public Works (780) 360-4455

REA LTD (780) 312-4211

Tech Services (780) 360-4560 or (780) 340-3672

Tribal Services (780) 585-3741 OR 1 (866) 585-3941

ERMINESKIN CREE NATION

Maskwacis, Alberta ermineskin.ca