



April 7, 2020

Statement from the Mayor and Council RE: COVID-19 situation

For the numbers today go to: <https://hnhu.org/health-topic/coronavirus-covid-19/>

I continue to be asked why the Medical Officer of Health does not release the numbers within the communities. Interestingly enough, someone said they were a Norfolk tax payer and deserve to know how many and where in Norfolk. I cannot stress this point enough: the numbers you see today truly do not matter. The virus is here, it is already among us all, it's in your community. Your daily behaviours should not be any different today, tomorrow or next week. What you are doing today is not going to change the number of already projected deaths, and projected positive cases. It is going to give our healthcare system a fighting chance to save some lives and get this under control.

I saw a clip on CTV the other day. A Toronto doctor, Dr. Samir Sinha, said: "Right now, this is really the calm before the storm. If people think that what we've been doing so far is painful, and the deaths we've seen so far are really it, NO!" He wants the public to know that this is not a drill. "We know that the numbers are showing that in two weeks, our hospitals will be full," he said. "We know that thousands of Canadians will die. And I'm not saying could die, I'm saying will die. "And all of us as health-care professionals, know that it's us at the frontlines who are putting our lives at risk. We are prepared to do so, and I don't say that lightly." "Are we scared? Absolutely," he said. "Is this stressful? Oh my god, I have never felt this level of stress in my life. And we're willing to do this and we're willing to stand strong, but it's harder to stand strong when you don't know that every other Canadian has your back. It's time that we all take heed and stand behind these great people."

To provide some clarity on things – and please understand things are very fluid and can change before I post this update. As of this moment, cottage owners, those that pay the property taxes may use their cottages as we legally cannot stop them from doing so. Forbidding these taxpayers to access their cottages would require a provincial order and that has not happened yet. It is my suggestion to those people that while we prefer them to stay at their main home, that they pick a place and stay at one or the other. We would like to minimize the amount of back and forth between communities as each trip increases the risk of contamination. As for renting your cottage, it is my understanding that there may be some direction coming, but at this time we are saying no to rentals, especially daily, weekend or weekly.

I have been asked many times from those using the trailer parks to try to fit their situation into getting into the park. Let me very clear, all parks and marinas are ordered by the Province to be closed, unless and only if you don't have any other residence in Canada for snowbirds. Absolutely no exceptions. The trailer park owner along with yourself will be fined if found to be in contravention. I cannot stress this enough and it will be heavily enforced.



I have been told by some that there are plans or postings for garage sales in the next few weeks. I can't believe that I am having to say this but if you are planning on a garage sale, please use your head. You will be fined much higher than what the treasure will bring you in sales.

If you witness something that is in contravention to any of these new orders as set out it is your duty to protect your community and contact the following with names and/or license plates and any information that would be helpful. You are not in the wrong and you are not to feel guilty. The guilty party is the one that is disrespecting you and everyone else and there is no patience left for those people.

- 1. OPP Hotline 1-888-310-1122**
- 2. H-N Hotline 519-428-8019**

Please do not call or send me or council members the information, as we are simply passing the information across to the hotlines as well and it would be more efficient for everyone to use the hotline. Furthermore it tracks all calls and cases which is important for enforcement.

Anson Place update:

The Health Unit continues to work with the home. Because it is a private entity, it is not simple to just backfill their short staff with those that work for the counties. Many efforts are being made to help them through this very difficult time. The Health Unit's ongoing investigation is trying to determine the sources and there could be many. One theory is that the funeral that many attended could have been a source. People, please remember that all the people involved are local friends and neighbours and when pointing fingers, have some restraint in that no one would intentionally put people in harms way. We are fighting this together and we must stand together to be strong. Any one of us can and will inadvertently pass this virus off to someone else. Casting judgement is unfair and inhumane.

Every time you go on a trail or through the park or argue about your rights to go fishing, ride your ATV through public property, and/or snub every other order that leads you to stay home, take a hard look at this picture. Remind yourself every time that you think it is OK to risk yourself, your families, your neighbours, think of those that are fighting for you. Maybe, just maybe, you can have the decency to fight for them and STAY HOME...

Today, I know that you're scared. So many unanswered questions. So much happening, so fast. I have always been the preacher of change and how hard it is for people to adapt to change, but even this is extraordinary. You are not alone in this, everyone is scared, everyone has fear, everyone thinking about the next days to come, no matter whether you are deemed essential or non-essential in the work force. How do we protect ourselves, financially, mentally, physically? Never before have any of us face such a



mountain and all I can do is ask you to embrace the challenge and with the might of us all we will overcome and we will be sure to climb it and leave no one behind. What makes being Canadian, that pride runs strong here in Haldimand-Norfolk.

I pose a challenge to you all today, our food banks, your friends, our vulnerable, are all in the toughest of positions as many continue to keep the shelves stocked with the basic needs. Each time you go out for your own needs, think of one person or a food bank that you can help. Instead of doing something just for yourself, do something for someone else. If we do this, even something as simple as getting some coffees for those that are working, such as the people collecting our garbage, that fear within us will become the strength that make us all better in the end.

We don't have much control over the world's state of affairs, and that can be frustrating, but we do have some control in deciding what elements of our lives we can influence. We can choose certain things to focus on in life and have a stake in the outcome. Be a part of the solution.

Stay Safe,

Ken Hewitt