



News Release

For immediate release

Mayor Facio's Message to Residents

April 30, 2020

Dear Residents:

On behalf of Council, we hope that you are all keeping well during this COVID-19 pandemic. It is so important at this time of crisis that we take care of each other and not forget to contact our families, friends, and neighbours. Continue with physical distancing and good hygiene, stay at home, but still find some time to take in some fresh air near your home and enjoy our beautiful surroundings.

As pointed out by the Provincial Health Officer, please do not go to the Emergency Room for COVID-19 testing. The 811 hotline or your family doctor should be the first point of contact if you have flu symptoms. However, for all other urgent issues the Emergency Room is there for you. Do not leave any health issue too late!

As we turn our minds to returning to some sense of normalcy please support our local businesses, they will need our help more than ever and we as a community need them to recover from this lockdown. Approximately 500 workers in the Harrison Hot Springs hospitality industry have lost their jobs because of COVID-19 and we will need them back at some point, hopefully sooner than later. The Federal and Provincial governments are providing assistance for both businesses and residents to recover. If you are looking for information, we have provided links to resources on our website, and the Agassiz-Harrison Community Services are available to help you in many ways as well.

If you are worried about paying your property taxes please know that while the due date remains July 2nd, we have approved the postponement of applying the late payment penalties to October 1st, 2020 (for this year only). Additionally, the Province has property tax deferment programs that are available to owners of principal residences. These programs allow qualified homeowners to defer their taxes until they sell the property and the Province is strongly encouraging local governments to steer people to these programs should they require the financial assistance.

The Village will continue to focus on providing essential services to its citizens and managing expenditures, while coping with reduced revenue streams due to closures of municipal facilities. To ensure the security of our water and wastewater systems, the Village helped draft a mutual aid agreement with neighboring jurisdictions which allows us to rely upon our neighbors should we need assistance

and to provide reciprocal services should they need assistance. We are also working on a strategy to reopen roads, beaches and facilities when the Provincial Health Orders are relaxed. I am pleased to announce that we have implemented a video recording system in Council Chambers and will be testing it out at next Monday's Council meeting. If all goes well, a recording of the meeting will be uploaded to YouTube for you to watch at your convenience. A link to the video will be available on our website the day after the meeting.

To Dr. Henry and the frontline workers and all those serving our communities we thank you for all you've done. To our Village staff and crew, thank you for keeping the wheels turning.

Together we will overcome this. Be calm, be kind, stay safe everyone!

Contact:

Village of Harrison Hot Springs

604-796-2171

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Further information available:

- www.harrisonhotsprings.ca/covid-19-information/
- www.agassiz-harrisoncs.ca/
- www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/taxes/property-taxes/annual-property-tax/defer-taxes