
Township of West Lincoln

MEDIA RELEASE

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Update # 14 - West Lincoln response to COVID-19 matters – What Are and What Aren't Essential Services

West Lincoln, Ont. – April 24th, 2020

The Township of West Lincoln Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) continues to be partially activated in response to the spread of the COVID-19 virus in the Niagara Region.

We've received questions about what are and what aren't essential services, so we are sharing some clarification.

West Lincoln must maintain its facilities, infrastructure, open spaces and roadways even though many of these areas are experiencing restricted or limited usage.

Maintaining our roads and municipal infrastructure ensures that they continue to operate as residents expect them to. Cutting grass in parks and sports fields and doing forestry work allows us to control weeds, overgrowth, ticks and rodents. In the long run it ensures our fields will be financially viable, and ready for the community when the emergency is lifted.

While they are doing that work, we are keeping our staff safe and ensuring workers are modifying processes and procedures to eliminate or reduce face to face interactions between residents and workers and in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Province of Ontario as part of their State of Emergency with COVID-19.

COVID-19 Essential & Non-Essential Operations

The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMPCA) was established as a result of the Government of Ontario declaring a provincial emergency. In addition to the Act, an Order was issued under Subsection 7.0.2 (4) – which identifies the Closure of Places of Non-Essential Businesses Ontario Regulation 82/20 (O.Reg. 82/20).

The onus is on the owner, contractor or person responsible for the place of business to ensure they are complying with all applicable legislation, orders and regulations to determine whether or not their business is permitted.

The list below shall be considered a guideline for the public. These guidelines are subject to change as the province releases further information. For an updated list of essential workplaces, please visit: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/list-essential-workplaces>.

Outdoor Maintenance

- Outdoor sports fields and parks are closed to the public, however maintenance is deemed essential to maintain and preserve their current and future condition, control overgrowth, rodents, ticks and weeds. This work will ensure that these facilities are ready for operation once the emergency is lifted.
- The installation of driveways, walkways, patios and steps are non-essential.
- Landscaping services that include grass cutting, spraying for weeds and pest control are considered essential.
- The installation of a new fence is considered non-essential, however, repairing a fence for safety and security reasons is considered essential.

Building, Construction, Demolition

- Construction related to hazardous conditions or an Unsafe Building Order is considered essential.
- The construction of decks, sheds, garages, carports and covered porches are considered non-essential.
- Any building permit issued prior to April 4, 2020 for the construction of a residence is considered essential. Any permit issued after this date is considered non-essential.
- Residential renovations that commenced prior to April 4, 2020 will be considered essential.
- The construction of farm buildings or any building used for producing, processing, manufacturing or distributing food, beverage or agricultural products is considered essential.
- Roof repair causing damage to a building is considered essential.

Mayor Dave Bylsma stated:

“It continues to be a high priority to maintain vigilant and thorough protocols to protect our residents. I am pleased to report that staff and Council are fully engaged to make any adjustments that arise as we gain understanding about this crisis or as new developments emerge. I am confident that the Township will continue to function in a cohesive manner safely to the end of this emergency. Additionally, on behalf of Council, a huge thank you to all in frontline healthcare and essential service, to whom we owe a tremendous debt.”

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