

COVID-19 Regional Update – March 13, 2021

One year ago, last night, I was sitting in the arena for my son's last hockey practice before Provincials. Half the team had already departed for Vancouver with an overnight stop planned in Osoyoos and the rest of us were heading west in the morning. I remember exactly where I was sitting on the bleachers when my phone rang with the news Provincials was being immediately cancelled and a Province-wide state of Local Emergency was being declared. Never in my wildest imagination could I have predicted this past year...but here we are, one year later, with our weekly update/recap.

Vaccine Clinics Set to Open in the East Kootenay

Interior Health is opening 49 vaccine clinics throughout the Interior Health region as the Province moves to expedite its vaccine program. Local clinics will be opened as follows:

- **Cranbrook** - Cranbrook Curling Centre - Opens March 15
- **Kimberley** - Centennial Hall - Opens March 15
- **Invermere** - Invermere Catholic Church - Opens March 15
- **Elkford** - Elkford Health Centre - Opens March 15
- **Fernie** - Elk Valley Hospital Education Room - Opens March 15 (*Note: Fernie Memorial Arena will be used as a larger vaccination site starting April 12*)
- **Sparwood** - Sparwood Health Centre - Opens March 15

Those currently eligible to receive vaccines are:

- Seniors born in or before 1936 (85 years+) and Aboriginal people born in or before 1956 (65 years +) and Elders
- Starting on March 22: Seniors born in or before 1941 (80 years+)

Only call to register for a vaccine when you're eligible. To get the latest information on how to book a vaccine, what you will need to bring with you, and when you can book, visit:

<https://news.interiorhealth.ca/news/covid-19-vaccines/>

Outdoor Groups of 10 Now Permitted

A big change this week in the Provincial Order, which still remains in place, is that the Order has been amended to allow for gatherings of up to 10 people outside, but does not apply to any indoor locations. The orders for restaurants and bars continue, as does the need to follow all other COVID restrictions and safety plans.

- Up to 10 people may gather at a park or beach.
- Up to 10 people may gather in the backyard of a residence.
- No gatherings of any size are allowed indoors with anyone other than your household or, if you live alone, your core bubble.

Do not gather with several groups of new people – stick to the same people. Continue to use COVID-19 layers of protection and maintain physical distancing.



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To review the specifics around the restrictions: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restrictions>

Latest Local Stats from the BC Centre for Disease Control:

- Between February 28 and March 6, there were 7 cases in the Cranbrook Local Health Area (LHA) and 1 case in the Windermere (Columbia Valley) LHA. No positive cases were reported in the Kimberley or Fernie (Elk Valley/South Country) LHAs.
- The cumulative data is reported monthly - from January 2020 to end of February 2021, there were a total of 155 cases in the Fernie LHA, 83 in Cranbrook LHA, 19 in Kimberley LHA, and 34 in the Windermere (Columbia Valley) LHA
- A reminder that the Local Health Areas include different boundaries than the name may imply - Fernie, for example, includes the whole Elk Valley and South Country. To look at the map of LHA's, [click here](#).

Provincial Stats (up to 4pm on Friday, March 12)

- In the past 24 hours, there have been 39 new positive cases in Interior Health. There are 378 active cases in IH, with 15 people in hospital, 5 of whom are in ICU.
- In the past 24 hours, there have been 648 new positive cases in BC, for a total of 86,867 since January 1, 2020.
- 80,325 people have recovered.
- There are 5,070 active cases in BC currently, with 9,155 people under active monitoring.
- 255 individuals are currently hospitalized with COVID-19, 67 of whom are in intensive care.
- There have been no new COVID-related deaths in the past 24 hours.
- The Province presented new modelling this week: [COVID-19 - One Year of the Pandemic in BC](#)
- The latest modelling shows the trends in Interior Health trending down - if we continue with current contact rates.
- To date, 380,743 doses of a COVID-19 vaccine have been administered in B.C., 87,024 of which are second doses.
- Link to the latest Provincial Update: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021HLTH0020-000468>

BC Recovery Benefit Application Deadline is June:

If you have not applied for the BC Recovery Benefit - which is a one-time, tax free payment of up to \$1000 for eligible families and single parents, and up to \$500 for eligible individuals, the deadline to apply is June 30. To learn more or apply: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/economic-recovery/recovery-benefit>

Koocanusa ORV / Crown Land Restriction Remains in Place:

I have had a few inquiries in the past few days about the Provincial Order restricting off-road vehicle use and overnight camping on Crown land (outside designated areas) in the Koocanusa area. That is an



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Order of the Province and it remains in place currently. If there are any changes to the Order, we will be sure to get the word out to you; however, at this time it remains in place. You can view of a map of the area affected [HERE](#).

Take care of you and yours,
Loree