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Mayor's Message on COVID-19  
August 18, 2020

Hello everyone.

Not a lot has changed across Ontario in the last week, it seems that the daily new cases stay around 100 with 125 new cases today.

Within the Sudbury health unit, after the spike of the previous week, only 1 new case in the last week is great news! The challenge for us all moving forward in this new normal is to continue doing what we're doing as it is working.

Increasingly, our public health officials are giving a consistent message on our need to prepare for the long haul. There is a realistic expectation that even when a vaccine is developed and disseminated that it still may be a year or more before things will start to turn around. Physical distancing, masks in tight spaces and a good measure of common sense will need to be the normal that we all embrace (as we are now).

Yesterday I participated in a number of virtual presentations hosted by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO). Their annual conference is through Zoom this year out of necessity. Of particular interest to me was a presentation by Matthew Pegg, the current City of Toronto Fire Chief. Mr. Pegg was Toronto's lead in their emergency control group throughout this pandemic and he had some valuable observations. Toronto's methodology was described as: save lives, do not overwhelm their medical capacity and to protect the economy as best they could. He identified a number of things that were common across our province:

- Personal protective equipment (PPE) availability was a serious problem and to some degree still is;
- Shutting down services became necessary and was easy;
- Planning the restart was much more difficult;
- Handling media was very challenging, dealing with misinformation an even bigger challenge;
- Getting people to recognize how to stay safe initially took a lot of repeated messaging (even down to painting circles in the grass in a local park in an effort to spread people out!).

Mr. Pegg urged everyone not to become complacent. Like many others, he does expect some form of a second wave although it can and should be manageable.

Lastly, he acknowledged that the overwhelming majority of the public did support the measures implemented and continued to work hard to keep everyone safe.

Thank you,

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