



Mayor's Message on COVID-19
August 25, 2020

Hello everyone, week 23 for my messages.

For the past 23 weeks, for a portion of at least every Tuesday I commit to a message on COVID-19. As your mayor, part of my ongoing responsibility is to keep folks informed and as safe as possible during this pandemic. I spend a considerable amount of time reading what I believe to be true and accurate information primarily from services that I share emerging trends or new information weekly. This week these are some of the things making the news that may have implications for all of us now or in the future:

- World Wide, total cases now approach 24 million and COVID-19 related deaths are well over 800,000.
- Canadian cases are slowly heading in the wrong direction, 563 new cases Monday.
- Because of rising numbers in Alberta and British Columbia, enforcement is stepping in with fines for deliberate non-compliance.
- There are growing problems with people ignoring health guidelines by grossly exceeding group sizes in confined spaces at private home parties.
- Hong Kong has reported the first documented case of a person re-infected with COVID-19 after recovering from an initial infection. Apparently the second infection was from a different strain of COVID-19.
- 55 flights between Aug 1 – Aug 18 into Canada has passengers who tested positive after arriving in our country where the vast majority landed in Toronto.

Our Federal Government is still advising Canadians against leaving the country for non-essential purposes. If you do, it is mandatory to self isolate for 14 days upon return regardless of your symptoms. Saliva based Covid-19 testing has not yet been approved in Canada by Health Canada. It is being used elsewhere and does work. According to medical experts these saliva tests are much easier to conduct and much quicker to get results.

As we edge closer to re-opening our schools in some fashion, the ability to easily test and get speedy results becomes very important. From my observations at a number of businesses across Manitoulin, it is obvious that most are busy from the line-ups at their doors.

What is particularly nice to see is that the majority of people are respecting the guidelines in the new normal to keep everyone safe.

From Billings Township, a big thank you!
Ian