



## WASAGAMING TOWNSITE – INFORMATION UPDATE – COVID-19

UPDATED MAY 1, 2020

We understand that many of our stakeholders are experiencing significant challenges due to the evolving situation with COVID-19, and our thoughts are with everyone who has been impacted by this global challenge. We are writing to provide you with an update on Parks Canada's response. Please keep the following points in mind:

- You can still continue to access your businesses, cottages and cabins.
- Parks Canada recommends that businesses follow the guidance and direction provided by public health authorities and the Public Health Agency of Canada. All park facilities remain temporarily closed and all visitor services remain suspended until further notice.
- Parks Canada is working on an approach regarding the resumption of services and the opening of our sites across the country. We look forward to reopening our sites once the appropriate measures are in place to ensure the health and safety of Canadians, visitors and Parks Canada team members.

The health and safety of Canadians, visitors, and Parks Canada team members is of the utmost importance to the Agency. We are taking steps to support Canada's efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19 and reduce risks to Canadians, visitors, residents, employees, and other users of Parks Canada spaces.

Please follow Parks Canada's social media channels and visit our [website](#) for information and updates on the status of all Parks Canada places.

The following information is specific to the Wasagaming Townsite:

### **Will there be any abatements for commercial land rent due to the impact on commercial operations caused by COVID-19?**

The Government of Canada has announced significant investments to help Canadian businesses weather the economic impacts of this pandemic. Additional details on Canada's COVID-19 *Economic Response Plan* can be found on the Government of Canada website at [www.canada.ca](http://www.canada.ca).

The Government of Canada, in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, continues to explore options that will help mitigate the impacts of this pandemic on Canadian businesses.

Furthermore, Parks Canada recognizes that many businesses are facing significant financial and operational challenges due to the of this pandemic on the travel industry and Parks Canada operations. To help businesses Parks Canada has announced it will defer payments on commercial leases and licences of occupation until September 1, 2020. without any interest or administrative charges. Rest assured that we will provide further updates on possible future measures taken by Parks Canada or the Government of Canada, when necessary and as information becomes available.

### **Are businesses in national park townsites in national parks allowed to be open?**

Parks Canada recommends that businesses follow the guidance and direction provided by public health experts in their jurisdiction as well as the Public Health Agency of Canada.



Commercial businesses operating in townsites have the right to **access** their leasehold premises.

If a business does open, they are required to take appropriate measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as directed by public health authorities in their jurisdiction as well as the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Parks Canada strongly encourages Canadians to stay home to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and not visit national parks at this time.

**Will Parks Canada enforce provincial rules on closures for non-essential businesses?**

Parks Canada is asking Canadians to support the national effort to limit the spread of COVID-19 by staying home. Anyone considering a visit to a Parks Canada location should cancel their plans. Parks Canada is monitoring visitation given the temporary suspension of visitor services, the temporary closure of visitor facilities, and the suspension of visitor vehicle access. However, access to essential businesses in national park townsites is permissible.

The Agency is communicating these measures through the media, over social media, on the Agency's website and mobile app, and at locations across the country. However, access to essential businesses in national park townsites is permissible.

Parks Canada recommends that businesses follow the guidance and direction provided by public health authorities in their jurisdiction as well as the Public Health Agency of Canada. Parks Canada supports the provincial direction and encourages non-essential businesses to remain closed, but we are not actively enforcing closures at this time.

Parks Canada Wardens will continue to patrol Parks Canada places and, where required, will remind visitors to respect measures in place to limit the spread of COVID-19.

**If customers come to the park townsites to visit businesses, where can they park if parking lots are closed?**

Local services are limited. Parks Canada is asking Canadians to stay home.

Parks Canada operated public parking lots remain closed; however, customers and residents of townsites will still be permitted vehicular access and customers of essential businesses can park in designated parking stalls for those businesses (within their leasehold space) or in street parking stalls.

**Do businesses need to renew their business licences if they are closed?**

Business licences are required for a business to operate as a valid business in the townsite. Any business that plans to open (including restaurants that may offer take out or delivery services) must renew its business licence prior to opening. If a business is closed, it is not necessary to renew the business licence as long as the business remains closed.

**When will recreational fishing be allowed?**

Parks Canada is following the advice of public health experts and implementing measures to support Canada's efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19) and reduce risks to Canadians,

visitors and employees. Parks Canada is asking Canadians to support this national effort by staying home and not visiting national parks.

The sale of all Parks Canada passes and permits has been suspended until at least May 31, 2020. In addition, entry kiosks and visitor centres are closed, as a result fishing permits cannot currently be sold or validated.

Please note that visitor services are suspended and all visitor facilities are temporarily closed. Many trails and day-use areas are no longer accessible due to road closures. Park users must obey all signage and closures.

More information will be made available regarding the timing of potential opening of facilities as it becomes available.

### **Is recreational boating allowed?**

The Agency has suspended visitor services at all Parks Canada places until at least May 31, 2020. This includes all parking lots, washrooms and day use facilities. Parks Canada strongly recommends that Canadians limit their use of national parks, historic sites, and marine conservation areas at this time.

Recreational boating is currently suspended in Riding Mountain National Park until at least May 31, 2020 as it would interfere with our aquatic invasive species (AIS) prevention program. For more information, visit: <https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/pn-np/mb/riding/visit/moto-boat>

Area closure on the lakes may be required to help ensure visitor safety or support aquatic invasive species prevention initiatives.

### **Will an abatements and/or deferral for residential leases be considered?**

Parks Canada continues to evaluate actions to support residents and commercial businesses within townsites. No decision has been made with regards to townsite services, including capital improvement projects, at this time.

### **Will businesses and residents of the townsite be expected to pay their prorated share of capital improvements for the 2020-21 year or will this be deferred?**

Parks Canada continues to evaluate actions to support residents and commercial businesses within townsites. No decision has been made with regards to townsite services, including capital improvement projects, at this time.

### **I am an event organizer, can I still hold my event in the park?**

Parks Canada values the contributions of third party event organizers in national parks. To support Canada's efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19, Parks Canada has suspended camping, group activities and events at all Parks Canada places across the country until at least May 31, 2020.

### **Previous Q&A's:**

#### **Will cabin, cottage and business owners have access to their properties on April 1, 2020?**

Parks Canada is strongly encouraging residents to follow government direction and stay home where possible. While there may be a barricade you can access your cabin/cottage or business.

Parks Canada is asking that visitors respect and support the Government of Canada's and local communities' efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19, and cancel any non-essential travel and to make socially responsible decisions.

### **Can contractors continue to deliver services for Wasagaming Townsite and the North Shore?**

Commercial and through traffic in national parks are not impacted by this temporary suspension nor is vehicle access for park residents. This means that motor vehicle access to national parks, like Riding Mountain, for business purposes like residential construction is not suspended at this time. Residents who have commissioned construction work on their residential properties should, of course, have obtained all necessary construction permits and permissions in advance. Residents and businesses alike should follow the advice of public health experts with regard to hygiene and physical distancing.

### **Will water service be available?**

Water turn on services will continue to be the responsibility of the lessee and may be weather dependent as per seasonal circumstances. Curb stop turn on requests can be made by leaving a message at 204-848-7275 and someone will return your call to arrange a time to meet you. Service delays may be limited due to current capacity.

### **Will there be a washroom and shower open for use?**

All washroom facilities throughout the park will remain closed at this time. We may revisit if required. However, the shower building and all other individual washroom buildings, kitchen shelters in the cabin area and campgrounds remain closed at this time.

### **What services are available?**

A limited capacity for critical services is in place for the provision of water, sewer and garbage services to the Wasagaming townsite. Snow plow operators are on standby to clear highways and roads as required. Playgrounds, trails, and access to general public park facilities will remain temporarily suspended to visitors.

### **What emergency services are active?**

The RCMP, Parks Canada Law Enforcement, Fire Department and Ambulance Services are all active. Please dial 911 in a life threatening emergency.  
For safety, wildlife, or wildfire incidents call Parks Canada dispatch 1-877-852-3100

### **Can I still get a building permit, business licence or other paperwork related to my lease?**

Townsite staff are monitoring telephone and e-mail messages away from the office. Leaseholders can expect some delays in obtaining permits or other documentation. All efforts are being made to complete these types of transactions in a timely manner.

Please contact the following staff for:

**Business Licence inquiries:** [koreen.miko@canada.ca](mailto:koreen.miko@canada.ca)

**Lease transaction inquiries:** [jacquie.pereira@canada.ca](mailto:jacquie.pereira@canada.ca)

**Development permit inquiries:** [allison.bardsley@canada.ca](mailto:allison.bardsley@canada.ca)

**Townsite Manager:** (204) 848-7243, [kevin.bachewich@canada.ca](mailto:kevin.bachewich@canada.ca)



### **How do I make a payment for Parks Canada invoices?**

- Via credit card at (204) 848-7275; If no one is available via phone please leave a message and we will get back to you.
- By mail: Riding Mountain National Park, Box 299, Onanole, MB R0J 1N0.

### **Are businesses in Wasagaming open?**

Local services are limited at this time. Our business community has been responding to this situation in a responsible way. Individual businesses are making their own decisions regarding opening.

### **When does Parks Canada plan to reassess the closure?**

Parks Canada is monitoring the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) situation closely and is working with the Public Health Agency of Canada, the federal government lead on the virus, and other partners to respond to COVID-19 and mitigate risks to employees and visitors. The Agency will be monitoring the situation and will communicate regularly.

A complete list of Parks Canada closures and the parameters of the closures is available on the Parks Canada website. Please visit [pc.gc.ca](http://pc.gc.ca) and Parks Canada's social media channels for information and updates on the status of all Parks Canada places.