



For Immediate Release

March 27, 2020

Public Playground Equipment in Ponoka Closed Until Further Notice

(March 27, 2020 – Ponoka, Alberta) – The Town of Ponoka, in cooperation with local school boards, has closed all playground equipment in public parks and on school playgrounds until further notice to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

“As the weather warms up and these play structures become popular attractions, the hard surfaces on playground equipment become a risk for virus transmission. That’s why it’s important that we close them now in keeping with provincial health directives to practise physical distancing,” said Albert Frootman, Chief Administrative Officer for the Town of Ponoka.

All Town facilities remain closed to public access, including the Arena, Aquaplex and the Town Office at the Ponoka Civic Centre until further notice in response to social distancing recommendations and to protect the health and safety of Ponoka citizens and Town employees.

Council Meetings Postponed

All Town Council meetings are being deferred over the coming weeks to help minimize personal contact and prevent the spread of COVID-19. Future Council meetings will be scheduled when matters requiring a Council decision arise. The Town Office remains open for business via phone, email, fax and online to respond to any immediate public needs or questions. “Closing our buildings to walk-in traffic is one way we can do our part to help slow the spread of this disease and protect the safety of our community,” said Frootman.

Although Town buildings are closed, access to free public Wi-Fi remains available in parking lots at the Ponoka Culture and Recreation Complex (Arena), the Aquaplex, the old Library and the old Fire Hall. Wi-Fi users are reminded to follow social distancing guidelines while using the free Wi-Fi.

Waste Transfer Station Remains Open

The Waste Transfer Station remains open to the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Payment by debit and credit card only (no cash) is currently permitted at the Waste Transfer Station to limit personal contact in keeping with provincial health directives.

Essential Town Services

Daily operations at the Town continue as staff work to ensure the delivery of essential Town services, including:

- Clean drinking water
- Waste water treatment
- Curbside collection of waste, recycling and compostable material



Citizens are asked to please avoid approaching Town staff who may be out working in the community in keeping with social distancing recommendations by provincial health officials.

Utility Bill Late Payment Penalties Waived for 90 Days

The Town is aware of the difficulties facing residents and businesses amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the ongoing uncertainty, the Town is waiving late payment penalties on utility bills for the next three months. Utility customers are encouraged to make full or partial payments as they are able to keep their accounts as current as possible.

“If you’re not able to pay your utility bill this month, that’s okay. We’re giving you a few extra months to make that payment,” explained Frootman. He notes citizens will be required to catch up on utility bill payments by the end of the 90-day grace period.

Citizens are encouraged to make bill payments as they are able using the following methods:

- Online payment through your bank
- Payment by credit card using the credit card slip payment form at www.ponoka.ca or by phoning 403-783-4431
- Mail in bill payments to the Town of Ponoka, #200, 5604-50 St. Ponoka, T4J 1G5

The Town of Ponoka continues to actively monitor and evaluate the COVID-19 situation daily. “We are dealing with a very fluid situation and are prepared to respond appropriately to help protect the health and well-being of our citizens,” said Frootman.

Protect Yourself and Others

Citizens are encouraged to protect themselves and others against the spread of COVID-19 by following the provincial health directives listed online at www.alberta.ca/COVID19.

For Media Inquiries:

Sandra Smith
Communications Manager
Town of Ponoka
403-783-0158
sandra.smith@ponoka.ca