



CP SCOOP – January 20th, 2021

PROVINCIAL UPDATES

Ontario Expands Workplace Enforcement Campaigns - Provincewide inspection blitzes will ensure essential businesses are operating safely - The Ontario government is expanding the current workplace inspection campaign to further protect workers and customers at essential businesses. Following last week's [big-box store blitz](#), provincial offences officers will now be visiting an expanded range of workplaces across Ontario to educate and ticket businesses that are not complying with COVID-19 health and safety requirements.

Starting today, more than 300 officers will be supporting these blitzes, and will be visiting a variety of workplaces that are allowed to be open during the provincial shutdown such as:

- Retail establishments, including big-box stores
- Restaurants providing take-out meals
- Essential service-sector establishments (such as gas stations); and
- Farming operations

OTHER UPDATES

Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority - Finding Peace in a Pandemic - Visit A Conservation Area - When COVID-19 hit last year, Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority's (MVCA) six conservation areas became more than a leisurely place for people to walk their dog or stretch their legs in the fresh air. Visitors began to seek out these areas as places of refuge and comfort at a time when the world seemed anything but normal. A record 75,000 visitors passed through MVCA's conservation areas in 2020 and, if the first few weeks of 2021 is any indication, that trend will continue this year.

MVCA is committed to keeping its conservation areas open and safe so visitors can continue to reap the physical and mental health benefits of stepping into nature. As such, an increase in visitors translates into an increase in operations to maintain property standards and meet public health guidelines. Following an annual review of all fees, the MVCA Board of Directors approved an increase to the site fee at Morris Island Conservation Area (MICA) to \$6/vehicle, which hadn't changed in four years.

"MVCA is pleased we are able to keep our conservation areas open for public enjoyment. All of the fees collected at our properties help us protect and maintain these natural spaces. By paying a site fee, visitors directly contribute to facilities such as washrooms, beautification of the sites, trails and ground maintenance as well as bridges and boardwalks," said Ross Fergusson, MVCA's Operations Supervisor.

Site fees at all other conservation areas remain the same, with the new Carp River Conservation Area continuing to be free of charge. Annual passes, which are the most cost-effective option, can be purchased online for \$47 + HST.

For more information, visit www.mvc.on.ca and follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit - Food Safety During the Pandemic - The Health Unit recognizes that COVID-19 has been tough financially on many of our citizens and that some people may have started a new home business that involves food to help make some extra money. For people who are thinking of opening a food-related business in their home, it is important to do your research before starting. Public Health Inspectors are available to help guide you through the process which may help prevent delays in opening and extra costs.

Food businesses (restaurants or in a home setting) must be approved not only by the Health Unit but by your local municipality. Those starting a home-based food business must have a kitchen that complies with the Ontario Building Code, the Ontario Fire Code, municipal zoning by-laws and the Ontario Food Premises Regulations.

Food businesses that require inspection include restaurants, food retail stores, bakeries, caterers, food processors and even home-based food businesses. Under the Health Protection and Promotion Act a “food premises” means a premises where food or milk is manufactured, processed, prepared, stored, handled, displayed, distributed, transported, sold or offered for sale. Whether you sell directly from home, deliver, or sell online these regulations still apply.

Anyone intending to operate a food premises must notify the health unit in which they wish to operate. A food premises cannot operate without prior approval from the Health Unit because we need to ensure that the food prepared will be safe for consumption and that safety protocols are in place for staff.

During operating hours, every food premises must have at least one (1) person present who has their Food Handler Certification. While operating during COVID-19, there are extra rules for keeping the workplace safe, including actively screening all employees for COVID-19 before every shift, using personal protective equipment including masks and most importantly having a workplace safety plan. The Health Unit is here to help guide the opening and operating of food premises.

For more information please visit the [Food Safety section](#) of our website at healthunit.org, email us at contact@healthunit.org, or call us at 1-800-660-5853.