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News

June 22, 2020

Southwestern Public Health Region Welcomes Beach-Goers and Reminds Them to Keep Safety in Mind

Medical Officer of Health offers tips on keeping COVID-19 at bay while enjoying regional Beaches

Southwestern Public Health's Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Joyce Lock, is asking day trippers to enjoy their return to the region's beaches – but to always keep safety in mind to contain the spread of COVID-19.

The Southwestern Public Health region, which includes Oxford County, Elgin County and the City of St. Thomas, moved into Ontario's Phase 2 reopening on June 12. Restaurant patios, salons, beaches and other amenities have been slowly re-opening to the public.

"Everyone's been waiting excitedly for the beaches to open. We know that with the cooperation of all beach visitors, and the appropriate cautions in place, this can be a safe and fun summer at the lake. We've got three pieces of advice for staying safe: limit your time at the beach to prevent overcrowding, wash or sanitize your hands really frequently, and keep space between your group of friends or family and other groups on the beach. Of course, this year, you also won't share beach toys and snacks with others," says Dr. Joyce Lock, Medical Officer of Health for the health unit.

While there is no limit on travel among regions, it is prudent that day-trippers coming to the area be mindful of their responsibility to practice respectful public health practices such as physical distancing, wearing a mask when physical distancing is not possible, keeping good hand hygiene, and staying home when sick.

Planning a trip to one of Elgin’s beautiful public beaches?

- Consult with the destination municipality to confirm what amenities and businesses are open. While some amenities opened on June 12, some may take longer to carry out public health measures, and some may choose to not open at all.
- Maintain physical distancing and wear a non-medical mask when this cannot be maintained.
- Wash hands often and bring hand sanitizer to use when soap and water is not available – especially before and after eating and after using a public washroom.
- Limit your time spent at area-amenities by having shorter beach visits or taking your own snacks so you spend less time waiting in line. This allows everyone to enjoy a less crowded experience.

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Graphics:



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About Southwestern Public Health

Southwestern Public Health works with its partners to ensure the health of the whole community. Our programs respond to public health emergencies; promote healthy lifestyles; help prevent injuries, illness and disease in the community; and promote positive change and social conditions that improve health. Southwestern Public Health delivers mandated programs under the Ontario Public Health Standards and is regulated by the Ontario Health Promotion and Protection Act. The health unit maintains primary locations in Woodstock and St. Thomas. For more information, visit www.swpublichealth.ca.

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