

Bulletin #2021-29

MUNICIPAL RELATIONS

Important Notice to All Elected Officials and Chief Administrative Officers

COVID-19 CONSIDERATIONS DURING THE UPCOMING HEAT WAVE

Environment Canada has issued a heat warning indicating that a heat wave will be coming to large parts of southern Manitoba later this week. Current forecasted highs are in excess of 30 degrees Celsius for a number of other days. For more information, see https://weather.gc.ca/warnings/index_e.html?prov=mb.

Public health orders contain certain exemptions for levels of government and do not apply to a facility where health care or social services are provided. Based on the current health risk posed to vulnerable persons by forecasted high temperatures and humidity, municipalities are permitted to temporarily re-purpose facilities such as community centres, recreation facilities, and libraries as cooling centres for vulnerable persons who may not otherwise have means to cool their body temperatures.

Changes are also being made to the Public Health Order to allow use of outdoor water facilities such as splash pads, wading pools, or pools during this heat wave.

Public attending these facilities must be reasonably able to maintain a separation of at least two metres from other members of the public. These facilities are being opened to address the direct impacts of heat on vulnerable persons and are not intended to be recreational opportunities. It is expected that outdoor water facilities will have required supervision by facility operators and best efforts will be made to ensure public follow proper physical distancing and public health protocols. Discretion should be exercised to open priority facilities and/or cease any operations that are not manageable. Also note that provincially designated enforcement officers will be monitoring and recommending any required adjustments.

In addition, municipalities and affiliated service providers may also consider providing services to address the health effects of the heat wave, including:

- distribution of bottled drinking water;
- provision of shade tents in priority areas;
- operation of transit buses as mobile cooling centres, where applicable; and
- ongoing partnership and support of drop-in and overnight shelters to offer expanded daytime hours during periods of extreme heat.

Municipalities can access COVID-19 resources including posters, fact sheets and related materials at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/updates/resources.html>. Simplified posters for public facilities are also available at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/providers/posters/>

Your continued collaborative effort to ensure the health and safety of your community is appreciated.

For general inquiries, please contact Municipal Assessment and Advisory Services at 204-945-2572 or e-mail at mrmaas@gov.mb.ca.

The Government of Manitoba has more information about staying healthy in heat waves at <https://www.manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/heatrating.html>. If residents have specific questions regarding heat-related illnesses please direct them to contact their local healthcare provider or Health Links–Info Santé at 204-788-8200 or toll-free at 1-888-315-9257.

Should you have any questions regarding COVID-19 public health considerations during a heat wave, please contact Manitoba Government Inquiry at 204-945-3744; or toll-free at 1-866-MANITOBA (1-866-626-4862).

*Department of Municipal Relations
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