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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 8, 2020

Leeds Grenville declares State of Emergency: Residents strongly urged to stay isolated Easter weekend

United Counties of Leeds and Grenville Warden Pat Sayeau today declared a State of Emergency for the entire region to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

"This is to reinforce the importance of social distancing throughout the Easter long weekend – and beyond - when people would normally be gathering to celebrate," Warden Sayeau said.

"It is critically important that we do not let down our guard. This cannot be a normal holiday weekend," he said. "My message is clear – stay home, self-isolate, avoid even family groups and stay safe".

"There will be other long weekends when the COVID-19 pandemic is over. We want you and your loved ones to be alive to enjoy them with us," the Warden added.

Over the course of the last 24 hours, the Warden has talked with all mayors within the United Counties. Some individual municipalities have declared emergencies while others have not, all for their own valid reasons, the Warden said. He noted no Leeds and Grenville municipalities are in need of additional resources at this time from each other or from the province.

"We all agree that our single and most pressing need, as we enter this long weekend, is the continued and focused efforts of all citizens to keep their distances," he said.

Leeds and Grenville citizens are asked to:

- Maintain six-foot separation distances – at all times
- Avoid all gathering of groups larger than five – whether family or not
- Shelter at home, venturing out only for necessities
- Do not travel – essential travel only

where **lifestyle**
grows good business

synonyme de **qualité de vie**
et de **réussite en affaires**

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"As a sign in one of our local stores states: "Unless your intended purchase is a real necessity, please do not enter our store," the Warden said.

He further stressed all boat ramps and marinas are closed throughout the United Counties in compliance with a provincial order. The result is seasonal residents and visitors will have no access to this area's lakes and summer cottages.

Today's State of Emergency Declaration ensures Leeds Grenville has the flexibility and is agile to respond to ongoing and new operational issues.

Counties rolling out new provincial programming:

- Operating two emergency daycare centres and, if demand persists, Counties' staff may look at the possibility of opening another centre, subject to provincial approvals.
- Rolling out \$1.5-million in social services emergency relief funds for vulnerable members of the population through assistance to individuals and front-line agencies.
- Working with the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit and assessment centre with a community paramedic program.

Critical care services maintained during the outbreak:

- The Counties' long-term care home in Athens, Maple View Lodge, has an influenza outbreak. There are new testing protocols for all long-term care facilities in Ontario, along with many precautions and infection control currently in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19
- Protection of healthcare workers and other front-line workers. Monitoring to ensure the Counties' Paramedic Service and Maple View Lodge workers have the proper and sufficient Personal Protective Equipment.

Counties CAO Andy Brown said Leeds Grenville is working with community organizations and agencies. If volunteers are needed to assist, the Declaration ensures WSIB coverage for those valuable volunteers.

The Municipal Emergency Control Group is scheduled to meet again next Tuesday, April 14, or sooner if required.

Visit the [Counties' webpage](#) to learn more about continuation of Counties services. Subscribe to a [Special COVID-19 Business Support webpage](#).

April 8, 2020

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