



BIG LAKES COUNTY

5305-56 Street Box 239, High Prairie, AB T0G 1E0
T / (780) 523-5955 F/ (780) 523-4227

For Immediate Release

Big Lakes County COVID-19 Relaunch Plan

May 15, 2020: When the Province declared a Public Health Emergency on March 17th, Big Lakes County's Emergency Coordination Centre, made the decision to close several facilities and services in order to protect the health and safety of our residents and staff. These decisions mirrored the guidelines put in place by the Province, to help limit the spread of COVID-19.

On April 30th, the Province announced the Alberta COVID-19 Relaunch Strategy. This strategy puts safety first, while gradually re-opening businesses and activities to the public and getting people back to work. Big Lakes County has responded to the Province's efforts, by developing a COVID-19 Operational Plan for re-opening public facilities and services. As always, our plan places the health and safety of our residents and staff as a top priority.

Changes to County Operations

Big Lakes County Administration Building & FCSS Offices – UPDATE

Effective Tuesday, May 19, 2020, the Big Lakes County Administration Building in High Prairie will be open to the public. However, we still encourage residents to continue to use alternative payment methods such as mailing in cheques, online banking, etc., to help eliminate the amount of traffic in the office.

Effective Tuesday, May 19, 2020, the Big Lakes Family and Community Support Services Offices will be open by appointment only. To book an appointment with a FCSS Outreach Worker, please call:

- Kinuso at 780-775-3666
- Faust at 780-355-3896
- Jousard at 780-776-3811
- Grouard at 780-751-3806
- Enilda at 780-523-5925
- High Prairie at 780-536-0062

Effective Monday, June 1, 2020, the Big Lakes County Administration Building in Kinuso will be open to the public on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

The health and safety of our staff and residents is our top priority. Therefore, please do not visit our offices if you have a cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition.



BIG LAKES COUNTY

5305-56 Street Box 239, High Prairie, AB T0G 1E0
T / (780) 523-5955 F/ (780) 523-4227

Please be advised of the following mitigation procedures:

- The number of individuals within the main Administration Building lobby shall be restricted to 6 at any one time
- Hand sanitizer is located at all entry points of the facilities for use upon entry
- Members of the public shall maintain a 2-meter separation as indicated by markings placed on the lobby floor
- Physical barriers have been installed at the main reception desks
- Countertops and debit machines will be sanitized after each use
- Public washrooms located in Administration Buildings and FCSS Offices are closed
- Businesses cards, pamphlets, reports, etc., have been removed from the reception desks; however, they are available upon request

Big Lakes FCSS Bus – CANCELLED

Trips on the Big Lakes County bus are cancelled until further notice. If someone needs assistance in making other travel arrangements for critical medical needs, please contact Nicole Hanna, FCSS Manager at 780-776-0008.

Big Lakes FCSS Faust Afterschool Youth Program – CANCELLED

The Faust Afterschool Youth Program is cancelled until further notice.

Utility Penalties – UPDATE

During the May 13, 2020, regular Council meeting, Council made the motion to not waive utility bill penalties for June and July 2020. Therefore, we ask that residents continue to pay their utility bills when they are due or be subject to penalties.

Take-it or Leave-it – CLOSED

Big Lakes County take-it or leave-it sites located at our transfer stations are closed to the public until further notice.

Scheduled Meetings – UPDATE

While we are in a state of public health emergency as declared by the Province of Alberta, Big Lakes County Council meetings and Municipal Planning Commission meetings will be conducted only by electronic means through the ZOOM platform, which will be streamed. To view the meetings, please visit our [website](#). If you wish to schedule a meeting with Council or staff, please call the Administration Office at 780-523-5955.

Return of Service Bursary – POSTPONED

The deadline for the Return of Service Bursary for post-secondary students has been postponed to July 15, 2020. To apply visit: <https://bit.ly/2X0bebc>



BIG LAKES COUNTY

5305-56 Street Box 239, High Prairie, AB T0G 1E0
T / (780) 523-5955 F/ (780) 523-4227

Kinuso Municipal Library & Kinosayo Museum – CLOSED

The Kinuso Municipal Library and Kinosayo Museum are closed until further notice.

Private and Municipal Campgrounds – UPDATE

The Province of Alberta has published a Guidance for Private and Municipal Campgrounds to follow in order to re-open and resume operations safely. Big Lakes County requests that all private campgrounds implement and follow these guidelines: <https://bit.ly/2Z5L7IU>

As the health and safety for residents and visitors remains a top priority, campground operators are required to develop and implement policies and procedures before re-opening or continuing operations after May 1, 2020, outlined in the Covid-19 Work Place Guidance for Business Owners document: <https://bit.ly/2Aatomy9>

Playgrounds – CLOSED

Big Lakes County continues to recommend that playground areas/play structures remain closed during the Pandemic. In the Province's guidelines for private campgrounds, playgrounds are no longer restricted; however, AHS recommend the playground areas be closed unless the owner can assure:

- Structures can be disinfected on a regular basis (every 3 hours)
- Physical distancing can be maintained between users
- Maximum 15 people attend the playground at one time

Public Recreation Sites – CLOSED

All public recreation sites, including the Kinuso Park, are closed until further notice.

Pathways & Walkways – OPEN

Pathways and walkways are open to the public. When using these walkways, it is extremely important to adhere to physical distancing guidelines and keep a distance of at least 2 meters from others.

Changes to Upcoming Events

Big Lakes County Council has made the difficult decision to postpone and cancel some of the following summer events in Big Lakes County:

- Volunteer Appreciation Week Events – **POSTPONED**
- Jossard Water Treatment Plant & FCSS Grand Opening – **POSTPONED**
- Seniors Week – **POSTPONED**
- Hamlet Clean-Up – **POSTPONED**
- 7th Annual Big Lakes Charity Golf Tournament – **CANCELLED**
- Annual Ratepayer BBQ scheduled – **CANCELLED**



BIG LAKES COUNTY

5305-56 Street Box 239, High Prairie, AB T0G 1E0
T / (780) 523-5955 F/ (780) 523-4227

Help Prevent the Spread

All Albertans have a responsibility to help prevent the spread. Take steps to protect yourself and others:

- practice [physical distancing](#)
- practice good hygiene: wash hands often for at least 20 seconds, cover coughs and sneezes, and avoid touching face
- monitor for symptoms: cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat
- self-isolate for the legally-required 10 days if you have any symptoms that are not related to a pre-existing illness or medical condition
- take the [COVID-19 self-assessment](#)

Important Updates from Credible Sources

- [Alberta's situation and action plan](#)
- [Alberta Health Services latest health information and advice for Alberta](#)
- [Cases of COVID-19 in Canada and around the world](#)
- [Review emergency updates from the World Health Organization](#)
- [Mental Health Help Line: 1-877-303-2642](#)
- [Crisis Services Canada](#)

As always, Big Lakes County will continue to operate our core services including, Fire Services, Utilities, Solid Waste, Airports, and Road Safety throughout the duration of this Pandemic.

As we begin the process of re-launching businesses, services, and facilities, we ask that everyone please continue to respect the Provincial Public Health Orders, please respect one another, and please stay safe and stay healthy.

Big Lakes County will continue to monitor the progression of this situation closely. If you have questions about County business, please contact the Administration office at 780-523-5955 or email biglakes@biglakescounty.ca. For up-to-date information, please visit the [Big Lakes County Facebook page](#) or www.biglakescounty.ca.

Sincerely,
Richard Simard
Big Lakes County Reeve

For more information, please contact:

Victoria Zahacy, Big Lakes County Communications Coordinator
P: 780-523-5955 E: communications@biglakescounty.ca