



Update – October 16, 2020

1) Preparing for a safe Halloween

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) has put out some guidance for having a safe Halloween, which is only two weeks away:

- Stay home if feeling ill or if you have mild symptoms.
- Only go out with members of your direct household.
- Only trick-or-treat outside.
- Both trick-or-treaters and people handing out candy should wear a face covering.
- A costume mask is not a substitute for a face covering and should not be worn over a face covering as it may make it difficult to breathe.
- Consider building your face covering into your, or your child's, costume.
- Do not congregate or linger at doorsteps. Line up two metres (6 feet) apart if waiting.
- Avoid high-touch surfaces and objects.
- Whether collecting or handing out treats, wash your hands often and thoroughly or use hand sanitizer.
- Do not leave treats in a bucket or bowl for children to grab.
- Consider using tongs, or other similar tools to hand out treats.

2) Mandatory masks made big impact on Ontario's COVID-19 trajectory: study

- Mask mandates in Ontario during the COVID-19 pandemic may have reduced new weekly cases by as much as 25 per cent, a team of economists from Simon Fraser University found.
- The researchers also found that mask mandates dramatically increased mask usage in Canada, with self-reported mask-wearing jumping by 30 percentage points after mandates were introduced. Like almost all non-pharmaceutical measures to fight the pandemic, mask mandates hinge entirely on public compliance.
- Another study on mask mandates in Germany found that these measures caused a 40 per cent decline in the weekly growth rate of COVID-19 cases.

To read the full National Post article, visit: [Masks make big impact on COVID-19](#).

Reminder: On Saturday, October 3, 2020, the Government of Ontario [mandated](#) the use of masks or face coverings in the indoor premises of all businesses and organizations and their vehicles, with some exceptions. These regulatory requirements are in addition to the instructions still in place from the Medical Officer of Health.

Although the SMDHU [instructions](#) for masks or face coverings will remain in effect, the amended [Reopening Ontario Act, 2020 regulations](#) related to masks or face coverings will be applied first.

New: The SMDHU now has a COVID-19 Monitoring Dashboard available that provide updates on the status of Virus Spread & Containment; Laboratory Testing; Health System Capacity, and Public Health System Capacity. Click [here](#) to view the dashboard.



3) COVID Exhaustion and Mental Health

With the increase in COVID-19 cases in the province/country it's important to take care of ourselves and our mental health.

- COVID exhaustion may have set in quite some time ago and our stress/anxiety exacerbated due to continued change into our daily routines.
- Trying to manage the fear of the unknown compromises our mental health. We need to step back, take a deep breath, know that we all are stretched thin and quite likely all feeling the struggles.
- We need to give ourselves permission to recognize that no matter how strong a human we are, we are still human.
- Please, take time for you this weekend; rest, exercise, eat well, cherish beautiful moments and reflect on all the positive things that are in your life.

Reminder that there are free employee resources available 24/7 through ComPsych if you need to talk with someone:

Here when you need us.

Call: 1-866-641-3847

TTY: 800.697.0353

Online: guidanceresources.com

App: GuidanceNowSM

Web ID: TOWNOFMIDLAND

If you think you may have COVID-19 symptoms or have been in close contact with someone who has it, first self-isolate and then use [Ontario's Self-Assessment Tool](#) to see if you need to seek further care.

Remember to pre-screen daily when entering any Town building.

Any changes within a department will now be provided to Randy to be included in an update and copied to Clerks@midland.ca for tracking.

We are looking for positive news/stories about Town departments and staff to share both internally and externally. Please email rfee@midland.ca with details so we can promote the great work everyone is doing!