

Parksville-Qualicum Beach Community Update

Wildfire Smoke and Your Health

As a result of the wildfires burning throughout our province, we expect to see significant wildfire smoke reach our region soon. Wildfire smoke is a form of air pollution that can affect your health. Depending on the weather, distance from the fire and the mixture of fuels, wildfire smoke causes episodes of the worst air quality that most people will ever experience in British Columbia. ***Now is the time to prepare for the smoky days that can be harmful to your health.***

Different people respond differently to smoke, and some people are at higher risk of experiencing health effects. Healthy people can be affected by wildfire smoke too. Everyone responds differently, so listen to your body and reduce your exposure if the smoke is affecting you. The BCCDC recommends the following groups of people reduce their exposure to smoke:

- People with pre-existing chronic conditions such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart disease, and diabetes
- Women who are pregnant, infants and small children, the elderly

Health effects of wildfire smoke

Wildfire smoke contains very small particles that travel deep into your lungs when you inhale. These particles can cause irritation and inflammation, which can last until the air quality improves. Most symptoms are relatively mild, and can be managed without medical attention:

- Sore throat
- Eye irritation
- Runny nose
- Mild cough
- Phlegm production
- Wheezy breathing
- Headaches



Some may experience more severe symptoms and should seek prompt medical attention. Call [HealthLink BC \(811\)](https://www.healthlinkbc.ca), talk to your primary care physician or visit a walk-in clinic if you're experiencing shortness of breath, severe cough, dizziness, chest pain or heart palpitations.

Protect yourself from wildfire smoke

Here are some suggestions to help reduce your exposure to smoke and seek cleaner air. People with pre-existing medical conditions should take extra precautions and should always keep their rescue medications with them. If you cannot get your symptoms under control, seek prompt medical attention.

- Use a portable HEPA air cleaner to filter the air in one area of your home
- Visit public spaces such as community centres, libraries, and shopping malls which tend to have cleaner, cooler indoor air
- Take it easy on smoky days because the harder you breathe, the more smoke you inhale
- Drink lots of water to help reduce inflammation
- If you are working outdoors, use an N95 respirator that has been properly fitted by occupational health and safety professionals.

For more information, please refer to these links:

[BC Centre for Disease Control](#)

- [Wildfire smoke information](#)
- [Wildfire Factsheet](#)
- [Face Masks for Wildfire Smoke](#)

[BC FireSmart](#)

[BC Wildfire Dashboard](#)

[BC Wildfire Service](#)

[Fire Smoke Forecast](#)



BC's Restart Reopening Plan – Step 3

We are now in Step 3 of the BC Restart Plan, in place until September which sees a return to normal for indoor or outdoor personal gatherings. Should case counts and hospitalization rates continue to decline, Step 4 could come into effect as early as September 7. For now, these are the changes in Step 3.

- Provincial state of emergency and public health emergency lifted.
- Return to usual for indoor and outdoor personal gatherings.
- Increased capacity for indoor and outdoor organized gatherings, with safety plans.
- No group limit for indoor and outdoor dining, liquor services restrictions are lifted, and nightclubs and casinos can operate with capacity limits and safety plans.
- Limited indoor spectators at events and outdoor events up to 5,000 or 50% capacity whichever is greater.



COVID-19 Vaccination Program

Everyone aged 12 years or older can make a vaccination appointment. Register online or phone; your confirmation number will be used to book an appointment. Please refer to [Island Health's website](#) for information or call 1 833 838-2323 to book an appointment.

GENERAL INFORMATION

From the Town of Qualicum Beach

Town Hall is now open to the public with full services. Hours of operation are Monday to Friday, 9 am to 4 pm (except statutory holidays). Although the office will be open from 9 am to 4 pm, residents are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the other options for conducting business with the Town, including email, phone, or regular mail. If you do wish to attend in person at Town Hall, masks are recommended at this time. Contact by:



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| Email | gbtown@qualicumbeach.com |
| Phone | 250 752-6921 |
| Post | PO Box 130, Qualicum Beach V9K 1S7 |
| Mail Slot | Out front of Town Hall, nearest the fountain (660 Primrose Street) |
| Website | qualicumbeach.com |

From the City of Parksville

City Hall is open to the public from 8 am to 4 pm and the operations department in the Industrial Park from 8 am to 4 pm and closed noon to 1 pm. Here is information for the public:



- Entrance to the Parksville Civic and Technology Centre is from Jensen Avenue East only, with a one-way system in place to reduce contacts. Exit is through the cenotaph doors.
- Masks are strongly recommended while in the building.
- Staff may elect to meet with the public either in-person or virtually and in-person meetings will comply with protocols on physical distancing and masks.
- For now, access to the Vancouver Island Library continues to be the outside entrance, east parking lot.
- Main floor washrooms are open for public use.
- The public is welcome to attend Council meetings in-person beginning with the September 8 meeting. Until that time, meetings are webstreamed from the City's website.
- If sick, stay home and get tested.
- Refer to City [website](#), as well as [Let's Talk Parksville](#) for more information.

COVID-19 Resources

[BC Centre for Disease Control](#)

[Island Health](#)

Vaccine registration - 1 833 838-2323; <https://immunizebc.ca/covid-19>

Medical COVID-19 information - 811

For more information:

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