

April 14, 2020

TAHLTAN NATION COVID-19 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Important Message from Tahltan Leadership:

NON-TERRITORY RESIDENTS ARE CURRENTLY NOT WELCOME IN TAHLTAN TERRITORY

COVID-19 is not just a danger to our **ELDERS**. More and more, **ADULTS** and **CHILDREN** are starting to die because of this virus. **NONE OF US ARE IMMUNE.**

It cannot be stressed enough: **WE CANNOT AFFORD TO ALLOW FOR COVID-19 TO GET INTO OUR COMMUNITIES.**

By the time a person tests positive for COVID-19 in a Tahltan community, 50% of the community will likely have already been exposed. That means we will **LIKELY LOSE MOST OF OUR ELDERS** in that community. This virus will devastate our communities if we allow it to reach our Territory.

Right now, our communities are at a **CRITICAL STAGE**. Right now, we are **MOST VULNERABLE** because confirmed COVID-19 cases are both to the North and South of us.

Prevention is the only thing that stops this virus from reaching our communities and the only thing that will save Tahltan lives.

Please ensure you do the following:

STAY HOME: Unless you must go to work, or you are going onto the land to exercise with those in your household (people you live with).

AVOID ALL NON-ESSENTIAL TRIPS IN YOUR COMMUNITY: Stop going to other communities. Limit the number of times you to high traffic areas such as the store and post office.

SOCIAL DISTANCING: Do not gather in groups. Ensure you stay a minimum of 6 feet away from other people.

WASH YOUR HANDS REGULARLY: Wash your hands with soap for 20 seconds or more. Soap is the best-known remedy for killing this virus so wash frequently.

COUGH OR SNEEZE INTO ELBOW OR TISSUE: Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Put your tissue in a waste basket. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.

DON'T TOUCH FACE: Don't transfer the virus into your body by touching your face.

SELF ISOLATION: Anyone returning to the Territory must go directly to their home and self-isolate for no less than 14 days – so bring supplies with you. YOU MUST avoid all situations where you can accidentally or unknowingly pass the virus to our community members. Importantly, anyone can be a carrier, not have symptoms, and pass the virus to others. It is strongly recommended that those at higher risk, with compromised immunity including Elders, self-isolate. In other words, stay away from people outside your household. Overall, we ask that people stay at home as much as possible until we get through this severe threat we are faced with for the immediate future.

WEARING A NON-MEDICAL MASK: Wearing a homemade cloth mask in the community has not been proven to protect the person wearing it. Strict hygiene and public health measures, including frequent hand washing and physical (social) distancing, will reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus.

Wearing a non-medical mask is an additional measure you can take to protect others around you. Wearing a non-medical mask is another way to cover your mouth and nose to prevent your respiratory droplets from contaminating others or landing on surfaces. Just like our recommendation not to cough into your hands (instead, cover your cough with tissues or your sleeve), a mask can reduce the chance that others are coming into contact with your respiratory droplets.

If wearing a non-medical mask makes you feel safer and stops you from touching your nose and mouth, that is also good. But remember not to touch or rub your eyes.

It is important to understand that **non-medical masks have limitations and need to be used safely.**

DRINKING ALCOHOL: Alcohol damages your immune system, increasing your risk of catching COVID-19.

Tahlitan Nation COVID Website

TNCEMT understand that our members want to be informed, especially during times of crisis. That is why we have set up a Tahlitan Nation COVID-19 Emergency Management webpage - <https://tahlitan.org/covid-19/> - where all of our members can inform themselves about COVID-19 and our response.

TNDC

TNDC's priority is the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees, our communities and everyone we work with. We appreciate this a stressful time for Tahltan members and TNDC's employees, the majority of whom work at our Newcrest Red Chris jobsite. We work diligently to be a good partner with the companies we work with and the communities we work in.

TNDC has been working closely with the Newcrest team to support the initiatives and programs they have established relating to COVID-19 and provide similar programs and standards for our employees. We believe these programs and initiatives are valuable measures in supporting our employees and their families. We are working to provide clear guidance and strong support to help our employees and communities, to help ease concerns and to get through this together.

TNDC is also working with the Tahltan leadership to protect the local communities and respect the measures being put in place. We have been sharing information bulletins issued by the Tahltan Nation and Newcrest with our employees as well educating our employees on coronavirus prevention safety measures and requirements. TNDC has also taken measures at our office, restricting visitors, cancelling all business related travel, and those TNDC employees based outside the Territory are being asked not to travel to Dease Lake until further notice.

TNDC PARTNERS

TNDC-SRS and Sodexo provide camp services at Red Chris. They have joined forces with Newcrest to support communities in Tahltan Territory during the COVID-19 health pandemic. They will use their combined purchasing power to deliver groceries to the communities.

Red Chris (Newcrest)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the new measures put in place at Red Chris please contact either:

Lorraine Callbreath

Email: lcallbreath@redchrismine.ca

Phone: 250-771-4200

Shannon Wilson

Email: swilson@redchrismine.ca

Phone: 604-800-9200 ext 162

Dease Lake Update

Please remember that the Dease Lake EMC is requesting that if you are leaving Dease Lake, if you have been out of town, and are returning to Dease Lake, or if you have someone who is new to your home to please contact:

Kailene Louie at the Peoples Haven: 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Friday at 250-771-5577 alternate number is 250-771-3442

After hours please contact Andrea Louie at 250-771-3032

It is essential that as a community we do not travel unless necessary. Also, if you are returning to Dease Lake or are new to Dease Lake please follow the Self-Isolation guidelines which have been provided via Facebook and Mailouts.

EMC Coordinator is Tina Etzerza - 250-771-3405 or 250-631-2442 - EMCDL@tahltan.org

Iskut Update

A lot of activities were put on over the Easter long weekend; for example, we had a cake decorating, basket making, and Easter window decoration contest. Winners will be announced later today. Our bingo is up and running with a big winner on Easter Monday! We are pleased to have fun activities up and running while we all remain at home.

The gate monitors are still working 24/7 and doing a great job of providing critical information to people returning home from camp; for example, we have a list of our supply runners and information on COVID-19. A huge shoutout to our gate monitors: Arnold and Calvin Quock, Loretta Nole, Tanner Louie, Joey Henry Sr. and Destiny Henry, Mikeala N, Christine L, Ray Henry 3rd, Charlayne W, and Waylon Quock. Meduh for all your hard work in keeping us safe!

Kluachon Cafe is in talks to reopen for our community, while doing take out orders only. Of course, this will happen while following and ensuring all social distancing guidelines are met. It would be great if those in our community could order a Burger and Fries.

Social distancing and hand washing are the best defence against the spread of COVID-19. Together we can prevent the spread of this virus.

Any questions or concerns please email the Emergency coordinator of Iskut emergencycoordinator@iskut.org.

Telegraph Creek Update

We are planning to go around again to talk to people and make sure that they do not let their guard down.

Employment, Contracting and Tahltan Businesses Update

TNCEMT understands that many of you will be negatively affected - employment wise - by what is happening. If you or a family members employment has been negatively impacted due to the virus, please reach out to the TCG's Employment Director Kody Penner employmentdirector@tahltan.org. The Tahltan Nation is here to help assist you and your family through these trying times.

Please continue to check the Tahltan Nation COVID-19 Emergency Management webpage regularly - <https://tahltan.org/covid-19/> - to inform yourself of the services and benefits that are available to you.

3Nations Update

The 3Nations have continued to assist communities by supporting local Emergency Management Committees/Emergency Operations Centres, contributing to local and regional efforts, and working to address the service gaps that communities and Nations are facing.

Communities across the 3Nations have been incredibly hard at work preparing and organizing their teams to protect members. The approaches each community has taken varies depending on the unique needs of members, whether it was home deliveries, monitoring security check points, ensuring food distribution lines were strong, and strengthening the coordination across their primary care networks.

Through various media outlets the 3Nations and community leaders have also been advocating for the continued attention to the communities of the Tahltan, Kaska and Tlingit.

Strong partnerships continue to be made with both the BC and Yukon government, First Nations Health Authority, Northern Health Authority, RCMP and all the various networks of supports that need to be aligned.

Education and communication materials developed for the 3Nations have been well used across all communities and a critical tool for informing, reinforcing physical distancing, and preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the communities.

With all the great work being done by so many, the intensive effort a few weeks ago seems to be transitioning into a steady stride.

There are opportunities, solutions and partnerships emerging that are potential fixes to the longstanding challenges communities have faced for decades (primary care

coordination, Yukon/BC issues, technology service gaps, using video conferencing as a way to receive medical and mental health support). In many ways this is exciting work knowing that this can have positive long-term outcomes for all the communities.

Thanks to all the 3Nation Leaders, EMCs/EOC, frontline, health care providers, Elders and every person who continues to do what they can to keep all our communities safe.

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