

NEWS RELEASE

Islanders will get through this together

GABRIOLA (Snuneymuxw Territory) — On Thursday in a special online meeting, island representatives agreed to form an Emergency Response and Recovery Committee for Gabriola, Mudge and Decourcy.

The organization will ensure an effective, systemic response through all phases of the Covid-19 disease progression, co-ordinating local planning with provincial health and emergency management actions.

The meeting included the Regional District of Nanaimo Area B Director, Islands Trustees, and island-based personnel representing the medical clinic and doctors, first responders, social support and transportation services, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Gabriola Health & Wellness Collaborative.

Task forces have been formed to source and increase the supply of personal protective equipment, to co-ordinate a response plan for food security and potable water, and to meet the needs of hard to reach and vulnerable community members.

All islanders are urged to stay home and shelter in place, keeping a minimum of 2 metres (6 feet) of physical distance from other people at all times if you do go out for essential supplies. Wash hands thoroughly and regularly.

Quarantine yourself and family for 14 days if you have cold or flu symptoms and upon returning from trips.

Call 9-1-1 for emergencies (fire, medical, police) and be prepared to tell the dispatcher if you have been quarantined or have any symptoms, no matter how minor, and if you or someone you have been in direct contact with has been outside the country within the past three weeks.

For non-emergency medical issues, dial 8-1-1 or call (but do not visit) the Gabriola Medical Clinic at 250-247-9922 and check their website for updates: <https://ghcf.ca/covid.html>.

Personal protective equipment for emergency use is being collected by the Gabriola Volunteer Fire Department. If you have N95 surgical masks, gloves, surgical gowns, safety glasses, face shields or hand sanitizer, preferably in unopened packages, please call 250-247-9677 to arrange for pick-up or drop-off at the North Fire Hall on Church Street.

There is now an open burning ban and No Fires signs are up on Gabriola. The only exemptions from the open burning ban are cooking fires and woodstoves to heat homes.

Sign up now for the RDN's emergency messaging system at <https://rdnemergency.connectrocket.com>.

Islanders are by nature resilient, and we will get through this, together.

For more information about the Gabriola Emergency Response and Recovery Committee, email GERRC2020@gmail.com.