



Media Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TOWN ISSUES “FINAL WARNING” TO RESIDENTS WHO DO NOT PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING Police, By-Law to start laying charges

WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE, ON – The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, in conjunction with York Regional Police, are taking a stern stance against people who do not practice social distancing, especially in public areas like parks.

York Regional Police officers along with town By-Law Enforcement Officers, will now begin to issue fines to offending individuals according to Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Iain Lovatt.

“It is unfortunate that we have to do this, but some people are still not listening,” Lovatt said. “If people feel they are invincible, and that they may not be contributing to the spread of COVID-19, they are wrong. This is your final warning Stouffville.”

On March 30, the province of Ontario closed all public outdoor recreation amenities and limited the size of public gatherings to no more than 5 people who are not immediate family.

“I, along with all of our councillors, have been receiving emails and calls daily from concerned residents who see groups of people ignoring these orders and restrictions,” Lovatt said. “We are talking about people’s lives. We have to do something about this”

Effective immediately, YRP and Town By-Law officers will begin to actively enforce the provincial order and lay charges on offenders who are putting others’ lives at risk. Fines begin at \$300 and range to \$5000 for repeat offenders.

“Just this week we have chased numerous people out of closed parks and getting significant push-back,” he said. “If we don’t take a stance, this will escalate on us with the weather warming up. We need to stop the spread of the virus through people that may not know they are infected.” Lovatt said.

If residents see any people in Town parks or congregating in groups of five or more, they can call the YRP non-emergency line at (905) 881-1221 ext. 7006 or visit yrp.ca/en/Online-Reporting.asp to file a complaint.

On March 13, the Town closed all facilities in response to the World Health Organization declaring COVID-19 as a pandemic. The Town then declared a state of emergency on March 24 at the advice of the Regional Medical Officer of Health.

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is continuing to collaborate with York Region Public Health, provincial, and national health agencies to monitor COVID-19. Further information about Town-related COVID-19 concerns, can be found at townofws.ca/COVID19. Further information about the virus can be found at york.ca/COVID19.

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