

Burlington Community Gardens

Dig in. Eat fresh.

COVID-19 Operating and Safety Instructions

May 21, 2020

The Province of Ontario announced April 25th, 2020 that it will lift COVID-19 emergency orders to permit the use of allotment and community gardens as an essential food service across Ontario stating these gardens are an essential source of fresh food for some individuals and families, including those who face food insecurity.

In order to open the community gardens the City of Burlington in consultation with Halton Region Public Health approves these instructions and that those with permitted garden plots must comply to participate. **People assigned a garden plot must indicate via email or in person to the garden coordinator agreement to abide to the garden rules, the legal permit and these COVID-19 safety instructions.** Before opening each City of Burlington community garden city staff will follow health and safety preparation and communicate these instructions to all garden members (gardeners).

All entering the community gardens must follow basic personal sanitation practices for controlling the spread of COVID-19:

- Prior to visiting the garden, gardeners should complete the Ministry of Health's [COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#) and follow the instructions provided. Anyone who is feeling unwell should not visit the garden.
- Anyone who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, or who has come into contact with someone who has shown symptoms to the virus must stay at home for 14 days following symptoms clearing.
- All in the garden must maintain 2m physical distancing at all times (unless gardening with members of the same household).
- All must maintain sanitary practices recommended by public health.
- Anyone displaying symptoms should be given the following Halton Region contact information and leave the garden.
 - Residents of Burlington Call 905-632-3737, ext. 6550 to book an appointment at Joseph Brant Hospital Assessment Centre.

- Residents can also call 311 to speak to Halton Region Public Health for direction on assessment.
- Gardeners may choose to wear a non-medical mask as an additional way of covering the mouth and nose to prevent respiratory droplets from contaminating others or landing on surfaces. This does not replace proven measures like physical distancing and proper hand hygiene.
- Anyone entering the gardens should wash their hands for 20 seconds with soap or use sanitizer before entering and leaving. Gardeners should bring their own soap and sanitizer. The city will provide a handwashing station in each garden as per direction from the Medical Officer of Health for Halton Region.
- Avoid touching your face, particularly nose, mouth and eyes unless you have just washed your hands.
- Produce may be donated between gardeners recognizing that any sharing of crops is at your own risk and 2m physical distancing is required.

Enforcement:

If a gardener appears not to understand or adhere to the safety instructions:

- The community garden coordinator must be notified.
- The gardener must be asked to leave immediately for the day with a copy of these safety instructions.
- If a gardener continues to disregard the guidelines that gardener will be banned from the garden, and their plots and any personal material forfeited at the discretion of the community garden coordinator.
- Severe infractions of non-compliance from garden members will be forwarded to Halton Police for proper follow-up and possible fines. Halton Regional Police Service COVID hotline to file a report is 905-825-4722.

Access:

- **Do not enter if five plots are already occupied.** Return at a later time, or do not enter until someone leaves. (Note: this number is subject to change as the season progresses.)
- **Gardeners should only visit their plots matching the even/odd plot number with the even/odd date once per day and try to keep a regular visitation time as much as possible.** For example odd numbered plot 15 would only visit on odd dates 3, 5, 7, 9 etc.
- Garden open hours will be 8am to 8pm (subject to change).
- Persons Allowed: Healthy required city staff, permitted gardeners and those of their immediate household, and volunteers of specific food bank donation plots for the purpose of planting, maintenance and harvesting only. Contractors servicing the hand washing stations.
- Gardens are closed to the public, friends and external household family of permitted gardeners, public and school tours, educational programming and events.

- Gardeners are asked to log each visit using their own pen on a provided log on/near the picnic table indicating plot #, date and time in/out which will assist to track visitation volume and routines.
- The garden gates must remain closed at all times and locked by the last person to leave.
- The entry combination codes will only be given to permitted gardeners that have agreed to abide by these instructions, registered and paid the program fee, and donation plot volunteers that have been instructed of the garden rules and safety instructions.
- Dogs and other pets may NOT enter unless a service animal.
- Children should only be brought to garden on an as-needed basis. Children cannot be brought in to the garden if they are too young to understand physical distancing and hygiene practices (unless they can be kept in a stroller or are carried in an on-body support. Gardeners who bring children to the garden are responsible for the children to follow the guidelines and to sanitize any tools the children use.

Physical Distancing:

- Unless gardening with members of the same household, everyone must maintain a distance of at least 2m from other people at all times.
- Particular attention should be paid to high-traffic areas in the common areas such as the sheds, gate, picnic table, water cabinets and supply piles.
- Physical reminders of what 2m looks like will be displayed in the garden for reference.
- Avoid using the picnic table. Sanitize any areas of the table you may use.
- If parking a car do so as far as is reasonably possible from other vehicles, as is safe and permissible. Vehicle parking passes will be provided to permitted gardeners in order to access the parking lots. Barricades will be open only to permitted gardeners and city staff maintaining the parks.

Cleaning and Disinfection:

- Handwashing stations with soap will be available in each garden. Caked dirt on gloves and tools should be rinsed off using the garden hose or water barrels to avoid excess dirt at the hand washing stations. Gardeners can also bring their own soap, or soapy water in a thermos, hand sanitizer or a premixed household bleach and water solution. Used disinfecting wipes must be brought home for disposal (reminder wipes are not flushable).
- Disinfecting solutions:
 - Hand sanitizer should be >60% alcohol-based or a product approved the [Public Health Agency of Canada \(PHAC\)](#)
 - Disinfecting wipes contact time is usually the time it takes for the surface to dry.
 - Diluted bleach has a shelf life of only 24 hours. Household bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite) should be mixed at a ratio of 1:9 or 20ml (4 teaspoons) per litre of water. Contact time is 10 minutes kept wet with product.

- Mixing products containing chlorine bleach with products containing ammonia releases chloramine gas, which is toxic to people and animals. Use products safely and according to the instructions on the label.
- Anyone entering the gardens should wash their hands once they have entered and upon leaving.
- Gardeners should prepare a travel bag containing their own small tools, towel, two pairs of garden gloves, soap, sanitizer, bags to bring home garbage and harvested produce, and the usual hat, sunscreen, water bottle.
- Gardeners are encouraged to wash their gloves after every use and not to share gloves.
- All gardeners are responsible to clean and disinfect common items and surfaces they have used before and after each use so allow time for this before leaving the garden:
 - Hose nozzles, faucet spigots, water cabinet latch, hose reel handle
 - Handles of all tools (i.e. wheelbarrows, shovels, rakes, hoes, forks)
 - Broom handle
 - Shed and gate latch, lock and chain
 - Pens and dry erase markers
 - Picnic table
- Garbage, plastic trays and pots must be brought home for disposal or recycling to minimize clutter.

Communication:

- The regular garden rules and these COVID-19 safety instructions will be posted in the shed. Extra copies of these instructions will be available to distribute.
- All gardeners will receive these instructions via email or in person to read and agree to prior to signing their permits.

I have read these instructions and agree to comply.

Gardener signature	Date	Garden location and plot #
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