



Region of Waterloo  
PUBLIC HEALTH AND  
EMERGENCY SERVICES

## **COVID-19 Update**

Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Acting Medical Officer of Health

July 3, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.

### **Farms with Migrant Workers - Order**

- In follow-up to the outbreaks of COVID-19 among migrant workers in southern Ontario, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health has strongly recommended to all local medical officers that they issue an order to the employers of temporary foreign workers to put in place measures to prevent or reduce the transmission of COVID-19 on farms.
- Earlier this week we issued this order to the 15 farms, that we are aware of, in Waterloo Region that are known to employ temporary foreign workers.
- It doesn't mean our farms were not already putting in place the appropriate measures. This is a proactive measure to ensure the measures will be in place
- We are also mentioning it today and posting a copy of the order on our website, in case there may be any other farms we may not be aware of that are employing temporary foreign workers. To which this order would also apply.
- The order requires that employers must:
  - Implement strict measures to ensure that all temporary foreign workers are able to successfully complete the mandatory 14 days of isolation upon arrival to Canada, as well as what to do if they develop COVID-19 symptoms
  - There are also requirements for active screening and infection prevention and control.
- At this time, we have not detected any cases among temporary foreign workers in our community, but this order allows us to provide farms with clear information on the strict measures that they need to ensure are in place to prevent or reduce the spread of COVID-19 between temporary foreign workers in these settings.
- We are collaborating with the Ministry of Labour who is conducting onsite assessments of all farms that employ temporary foreign workers in Waterloo Region.

## Rates by neighbourhood and socio-economic factors

- There have been questions about whether our rates by neighbourhood correlate with some socio-economic factors such as income, like we have seen in Toronto.
- We have produced (static) maps of some census data by neighbourhood, which we have published in the past and have updated with the latest Census data.
- These maps are on our reports page, and relate to: proportion of the population with low income, proportion who are recent immigrants, and portion whose language at home is not English or French.
- Based on this initial information at this time, at the neighbourhood level, we do not see a clear pattern of correlation.
- The Province will soon be rolling out instructions to health units on the collection of data on race, income, household size and language from individuals who test positive for COVID-19 and who consent to giving us this information, and health units will be collecting this data on a 'go forward' basis.
- So we will have more information about such characteristics going forward and we will continue to monitor trends.

## Extreme heat

- An extreme heat warning for Waterloo Region was issued on Wednesday
- It's expected that this will be a prolonged extreme heat event continuing through until Sunday.
- Extreme heat affects everyone. We can help protect ourselves from heat and humidity by:
  - Knowing the weather forecast before going outside
  - Planning ahead and modifying outdoor activities
  - Drinking plenty of cool liquids, especially water, even before we feel thirsty
  - Spending a few hours in a cool place or by seeking shade when outdoors
- Three cooling centres – one each in Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo – will be open this weekend due to the heat warning.
- For more tips and details on cooling centre locations and hours visit [regionofwaterloo.ca/extremeheat](https://regionofwaterloo.ca/extremeheat)

## Closing remarks

- We have made progress towards slowing COVID-19 in our community but we cannot take that progress for granted.
- We all have a role to play and I appreciate all of your efforts.
- But the virus is still present in our community.

- For those of us who can wear non-medical masks or face coverings, I continue to strongly recommend that you do so in indoor public settings and on transit when physical distancing cannot be guaranteed.
- Face coverings need to be used alongside physical distancing, proper hand hygiene and self-isolating and getting tested if we develop symptoms, to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community.
- Together we can continue to slow the spread of COVID-19 in our community, and help it move towards Stage 3 of the reopening.
- Thank you.