

COVID-19: Guidelines for Chatham-Kent Community Gardens

The COVID-19 pandemic is evolving rapidly, and this guidance is subject to change at any time. Community gardens play an important role in our food system and will continue to provide spaces for residents to grow their own food. Until further notice, community gardens are not a recreational space or place for social gathering. Should guidelines change with respect to provincially mandated physical distancing guidelines, those guidelines will also apply.

The following guidelines must be adhered to at all times.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

- Everyone in the garden must always maintain physical distancing of 6 feet or 2 meters unless with members of the same household or social circle (*see definition below).
- No guests are allowed in the garden at any time.
- No gatherings of garden members, except with your household group or social circle (*see definition below).
- Children should only be brought into the garden on an as-needed basis and should be instructed to follow the physical distancing and hand hygiene recommendations. Parents are to be responsible for their children at all times.
- The number of gardeners permitted in the garden at one time will be limited to the number of individuals permitted to gather outdoors based on provincial and local mandates. Regardless of what is permitted for social gathering from local or provincial mandates, physical distance of 6 feet (or 2 metres) from gardeners outside of your household or social circle **must** be maintained at all times.
- All shared seating areas that are not permanent will be removed. All gardeners are encouraged to bring their own lawn chair each visit, if there is a need for breaks while at the garden.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION

Hand hygiene is an important means of preventing the spread of COVID-19.

- Wash hands with soap and water before and after handling common tools such as hoses or gates and before and after gardening. If there is not a sink available, bring alcohol based hand sanitizer and sanitize hands regularly. Gloves are not a substitute for washing hands.
- Gardeners are encouraged to bring and use their own tools, if able.
- All gardeners should bring and wear their own gloves. Wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer after gloves are removed. Gloves should also be washed at home after every use.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Gardens will be closed to the general public. Only garden members are to access the garden spaces for maintenance and planting.
- All gardeners must follow the guidelines from CK Public Health and DO NOT come to the garden if you:
 - Have symptoms of COVID-19

- Have had contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 in the past 14 days or
- Have been instructed by the local public health unit to self-isolate due to travel or contact history.
- Keep trips to the garden to a minimum and limit the time spent in the garden.
- Due to the seriousness of the circumstances, access to the garden will be revoked for any garden member that is not following the guidelines set out for garden safety. During this time, it is important that we all be as considerate and safe as possible.
- For gardeners with allocated plots who choose not to use their plots this year as a result of concerns with COVID-19, such as those who are elderly or have compromised immune systems, gardeners can choose to have their plot temporarily reallocated by the garden coordinator for the 2020 gardening season. The garden could also be used as a communal growing plot for the season and food can be shared with community groups or others who may need the food.
- Let your garden coordinator know if you need assistance in maintaining your garden plot.
- All regular community garden policies and procedures are to be followed.

CK PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensure proper signage is available and posted on access to gardens
- Enforce the guidelines with support from garden coordinators.

Definitions

What is a Social Gathering?

At a glance:

- Getting together in groups of a total of 50 people or less inside or 100 people outside is ok
- Can be any group of up to 50/100 people
- Maintain a 2 metre distance with anyone outside of your 'social circle'
- Outside gatherings are preferred

What is a Social Circle?

At a glance:

- 10 people or less
- Close contact is allowed (e.g. hugging)
- Must always be the same people
- You can belong to only one circle

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Updated – June 11, 2020

Updated – July 16, 2020

Adapted from

COVID-19 Recommendations for Community Gardens, Sustain Ontario

COVID-19 Safe Operating Recommendations for Community Gardens, KFL&A Public Health