

MEDIA RELEASE

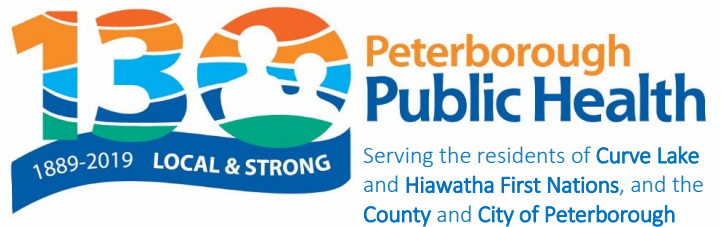
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, December 18, 2019, Peterborough

Peterborough Public Health Issues First Frostbite Alert of the Season

*Alert Covers the City and County of Peterborough and
Curve Lake and Hiawatha First Nations*



Peterborough Public Health has issued the first Frostbite Alert of the season because of forecasted nightly wind chill values of -30 or lower from Wednesday, December 18 to the morning of Thursday, December 19.

Extreme cold events are a potentially significant health risk and everyone is encouraged to take precautions to stay safe. Extreme cold temperatures can particularly impact the health of vulnerable populations including infants, the elderly, people with circulatory problems, and the marginally housed. During these cold temperatures, One Roof Community Centre will have extended hours from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. to provide daytime shelter from the cold. There are [various emergency shelters](#) available overnight in the City of Peterborough.

In order to protect the health of people in Peterborough County and City and Curve Lake and Hiawatha First Nations, Peterborough Public Health advises local residents to take the following precautions:

- Check face and extremities frequently for signs of frostbite. Exposed skin can freeze in as little as 10 to 30 minutes.
- Consider re-scheduling outdoor recreational activities, especially during the evening. There is a serious risk of hypothermia and frostbite if outdoors for long periods.
- Use caution when shoveling snow especially for those that have heart, respiratory (breathing) problems or other medical conditions. Snow shoveling is strenuous and can cause an onset of heart or respiratory problems.
- Check on the elderly or people with disabilities living alone.

What clothing should be worn outdoors?

Always wear clothing appropriate for the weather. Synthetic and wool fabrics provide better insulation. Some synthetic fabrics are designed to keep perspiration away from your body which keep you dry and further reduce your risk.

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Here are some useful tips:

- Dress in layers with a wind resistant outer layer. You can remove layers if you get too warm (before you start sweating) or add a layer if you get cold.
- Wear warm socks, gloves, a hat and scarf in cold weather. Be sure to cover your nose to protect it.
- If you get wet, change into dry clothing as soon as possible. You lose heat faster when you're wet.

Cold related illnesses include:

Hypothermia:

Symptoms/signs include: shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling/uncoordinated movements, memory loss, slurred speech, drowsiness.

Frostbite:

Symptoms/signs include: white/greyish skin area, skin that feels unusually firm or waxy, or numbness.

Increases in other health problems can also be seen, especially for those with other chronic medical conditions such as heart conditions.

Further information about the health risks of extreme cold and Peterborough Public Health's Extreme Cold Response Plan can be found [here](#) or by visiting www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca and searching for "extreme cold".

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For further information, please contact:

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