



COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

For Immediate Release

Ennisko:wa/March 31, 2021

DOH ADVISES AGAINST EASTER GATHERINGS

Mohawk Council of Akwesasne's Department of Health (DOH) is advising the community against Easter gatherings. The DOH realizes Easter and other holidays are a time when families get together and celebrate. However, please stay diligent to public safety measures. While Akwesasne COVID-19 numbers have been seeing a downward trend, the areas surrounding our community continue to surge in positive cases.

COVID-19 Variants of Concern (VOCs) have been circulating in and around Ontario. An estimated 65% of all current COVID-19 cases are said to be VOC cases. As variants become more widespread, an increase in COVID-19 cases has been occurring. VOCs are highly infectious forms of COVID-19, and can spread very rapidly in small communities. The B.1.1.7 variant (the variant first identified in the UK), which has been identified to be in the Ontario region, has been shown to be more transmissible than the original strain of COVID-19. This VOC can cause more severe illness, resulting in more hospitalizations and deaths due to COVID-19 complications. VOCs are affecting more and more young adults and those in younger age groups as well. There has been a spike in hospitalizations for this age group.

To avoid the risk of another outbreak in the Akwesasne community, the DOH is highly recommending people not to gather in others homes, or any other indoor settings, and to celebrate with those who reside in your household only. Celebrate responsibly, and seek alternative ideas to celebrate the Easter holiday.

The Akwesasne community has seen its numbers decline recently, and the DOH would like to continue this trend, avoiding a "third wave." Every gathering runs the risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus. Please, do your part, and follow the public health guidelines: wear a mask when in public, wash and sanitize your hands frequently, social distance a minimum of 6-feet when out in public, don't gather with others who don't reside in your household, don't travel outside of the 100-mile radius, and avoid any non-essential outings.