



PUBLIC HEALTH MEMO

COVID-19

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Interim Guidance for Multi-Unit Dwellings

The COVID-19 pandemic is evolving rapidly, and this guidance is subject to change. Please visit the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit (WECHU) website (www.wechu.org) regularly for updates and additional information.

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that spreads from person to person (close contact) through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It is also spread through direct contact with a contaminated surface when a person touches the surface and then transfers the virus to their mouth, nose, and eyes when touching their face. Individuals with COVID-19 can have symptoms from mild to severe and most commonly include fever, cough or difficulty breathing. These symptoms usually develop within 14 days. Those at risk for COVID-19 include individuals who have recently travelled outside of Canada or those that have had close contact with a confirmed or probable case of COVID-19. Close contacts of positive COVID-19 cases in Windsor and Essex County will be contacted by the WECHU.

Landlords, property managers, and residents can play an important role by taking the necessary precautions to prevent and limit the spread of COVID-19 in condominiums, apartment buildings, and other residential units. The role of community gardens:

For Landlords or Property Managers

- Postpone any non-urgent inspections, renovations, or repair work, if possible.
- Close all onsite recreational amenities (e.g., pools, gyms) and gathering spaces (e.g., party or entertainment rooms).
- Limit the number of people that gather in shared spaces such as lobbies, hallways, mail rooms, laundry rooms.
- Ask residents to limit the number of guests in their unit.
- Consider removing frequently touched items (e.g., decorative objects and non-essential furniture) from shared spaces that may be difficult to clean and disinfect.
- Increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfection of commonly touched surfaces in the building to at least twice a day and when visibly dirty.
 - It is strongly recommended that surfaces and objects are first cleaned and then disinfected.
 - Some areas to focus on are laundry room appliances (e.g., washers, dryers, baskets, and counters), door handles, light switches, mailboxes, stairwell railings, elevator buttons, and buzzer systems.
- Commonly used cleaners and disinfectants are effective against COVID_19 but it is recommended that disinfectants contain an 8-digit *Drug Identification Number* (DIN) which indicates that the product has been approved for use in Canada.
- Make sanitizer stations available in commonly used areas, if possible.
- Anyone recently returning from international travel should be encouraged to self-isolate for 14 days in their unit and use delivery options if they need food, groceries, or other supplies.
 - If symptoms develop, individuals should contact their health care provider or the WECHU at 519-258-2146 ext. 1420



For Residents

- Wash your hands with soap and water thoroughly and often.
- Cough and sneeze into your sleeve or a tissue. Dispose of the tissue immediately and wash your hands.
- Create an [emergency preparedness plan](#) to ensure you have what you need if you need to self-isolate.
- Stay in your room or unit if you are experiencing symptoms and complete the online [self-assessment](#) if you think you are sick or have been in contact with someone known to have COVID-19.
 - For further assistance contact your health care provider or the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit at 519-258-2146 ext. 1420.
- Regularly clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces in your unit, especially if in shared living spaces.
- Continue to practice social distancing by:
 - Limiting individuals in your unit to only health care supports or essential services required for security and maintenance.
 - Check in with friends, family and neighbors by phone or using other technology.
 - Avoiding crowded elevators by waiting for an empty one, if available.
 - Avoiding use of the mail room at the same time as other residents/tenants.
 - Limiting the number of people in the laundry room or other common areas so that the minimum distance of 2 metres or 6 feet can be maintained as residents/tenants use the appliances or other amenities.
 - Avoid gatherings of any kind in shared spaces within the building such as the lobby or recreation rooms, or outside on the property such as entranceways or gazebos.

Should landlords consider making modifications to the ventilation system in the Multi-Unit Dwellings?

While it has been shown that increasing ventilation (e.g., opening windows when weather permits) may help reduce the transmission of other viruses such as influenza, there is currently no evidence to suggest that COVID-19 can be spread through ventilation systems.