



Town of Stratford

Flu Pandemic Plan

September 2009

1. Introduction

The Town of Stratford provides a range of services to the residents and businesses in the Town. These services range from those that are essential to health and safety such as police protection, fire protection and drinking water supply to those which are not essential for short periods such as recreation programs and economic development. One of the Town's responsibilities is to plan for emergencies and the Town has developed a comprehensive plan to deal with various potential emergencies. One situation that the Town may face is an influenza epidemic, which may not constitute an emergency, but which may significantly impact the Town's ability to provide services to residents. A flu epidemic could result in significant employee absenteeism due to sickness of the employee and/or their family members and it could similarly affect the provision of services and supplies under contract to the Town. The Town also has a responsibility for the health and well being of its' employees.

2. Influenza

In June 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) has raised the level of the H1N1 virus to Pandemic status meaning that the virus can be found in multiple WHO regions. The H1N1 virus is a new but a moderate strain of the flu and the number of people who are likely to die from the virus is small. Health Canada and the Provinces are preparing for a possible flu epidemic in Canada this fall as the second wave of the H1N1 virus hits the Canadian population. The general consensus in the medical community is that, if it is not H1N1, there will be a local flu epidemic at some point in time and it would be prudent for the Town to be prepared for such an event.

3. Flu Pandemic Plan

This flu pandemic plan is essentially a business continuity plan. A local flu epidemic will likely mean that the Town can not continue to provide all of the services it normally provides. The development of a Flu Pandemic Plan allows the Town to pre-determine what services are essential to continue in the event of a local flu epidemic and what employees, contractors and supplies are required to deliver those services. The plan also addresses the impact on employees and their families and it includes measures to help to slow or contain the spread of the virus. It is recognized that these measures will not likely stop the spread of the virus but they should help to spread out the peak period of sickness which will allow the health care system to better cope with the virus and allow the town to better continue with the provision of services.

Following the advice of WHO, federal and provincial pandemic planning guides, the plan includes the following elements:

- C identification of essential and non essential services provided by the Town in priority order;
- C identification of employees, partners and supplies necessary to continue priority services;
- C actions to help ensure the continuation of services in priority order during a pandemic;
- C identification of employee actions to avoid sickness or the spread of sickness;
- C identification of potential social and psychological impacts on employees and their families and provide the necessary supports to help them cope;
- C communication plans for employees, residents, partners and other stakeholders

4. Service Priority Rating

The following are the services provided by the Town, ranked in order of the priority in which they should be provided should it be necessary to curtail the provision of some services during a flu pandemic (based on the priority rating scheme used in the Provincial Flu Pandemic Plan for the Health Sector):

- a. Service Priority Number 1 - Must Do, cannot be deferred
 - C water supply and distribution
 - C sewer collection and treatment
 - C police protection
 - C fire protection
 - C emergency response
 - C communications

- b. Service Priority Number 2 - High Priority, do not defer, if possible, reinstate as soon as possible if deferred
 - C sidewalk maintenance and snow removal
 - C building maintenance (for safety and cleaning)
 - C property maintenance (for safety)
 - C public transit
 - C employee welfare
 - C Stratford Seniors Facility

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- C computer network and systems
- C administration
- C accounts payable, receivable and payroll

c. Service Priority Number 3 - Medium Priority, can wait if a pandemic is not too long

- C recreation facilities and meeting rooms
- C parks and playing fields
- C special events
- C development control
- C street lighting

d. Service Priority Number 4 - Low Priority, can be brought back when a pandemic is over

- C adult programs
- C seniors programs
- C youth programs
- C long term planning
- C animal control
- C non emergency resident complaints
- C Economic development/business park
- C Sustainability

5. Service Pandemic Plan

The following table lists each service in priority order, the essential elements to the continuation of that service, the actions required to prepare for a pandemic and the actions required during a pandemic. The Chief Administrative Officer shall ensure that the pre-pandemic actions identified are carried out. If and when there is a local flu epidemic, the Chief Administrative Officer or designate will declare that this pandemic plan be enacted and notify Council and staff that the plan is operational. Staff are then expected to follow the plan and to ensure that the services are provided in the order of priority listed with the resources that are available. It should be noted that, even for the high priority services, staff should use their judgement and defer non-critical tasks where necessary to ensure that priority tasks are addressed first, even if that means helping out in another area.

Service	Requirements to Continue Services	Pre-Pandemic Actions	Pandemic Actions
<i>Service Priority Number 1 - Must Do</i>			
water supply and distribution	water quality testing (required to ensure safe water supply) water chlorination (required to ensure safe water supply)	C verify lab pandemic plan C check with DOFAE to see if alternate labs/protocols available C keep one extra chlorine drum in inventory C develop and distribute contact list for chlorine supplies	C if lab not available, increase chlorine residual testing C purchase supplies (likely to be available because three suppliers locally)

Service	Requirements to Continue Services	Pre-Pandemic Actions	Pandemic Actions
	<p>spare parts inventory (parts which are essential to continue service)</p> <p>operators (3 staff members are trained and certified as system operators)</p> <p>emergency repairs - watermain breaks (should be adequate number of contractors available)</p>	<p>C develop and distribute protocol for mixing and use of javex if necessary</p> <p>C ensure adequate inventory of critical spare parts</p> <p>C develop and distribute contact list for spare parts</p> <p>C develop priority list for vaccination when it becomes available</p> <p>C document procedures for critical functions</p> <p>C train other staff on critical functions</p> <p>C develop and distribute contact list for contractors who can repair water main breaks</p>	<p>C use javex if necessary</p> <p>C standard operating procedure</p> <p>C require qualified operators to work remote from each other and from other staff to the extent possible</p> <p>C standard operating procedure</p>
sewer collection and treatment	spare parts inventory (parts which are essential to continue service)	<p>C ensure adequate inventory of critical spare parts</p> <p>C develop and distribute contact list for spare parts</p>	C standard operating procedure

Service	Requirements to Continue Services	Pre-Pandemic Actions	Pandemic Actions
	<p>operators (3 staff members are trained and certified as system operators)</p> <p>emergency repairs - sewer line breaks (should be adequate number of contractors available)</p> <p>emergency pumping - septic haulers (should be adequate number of septic haulers available)</p>	<p>C develop priority list for vaccination when it becomes available</p> <p>C document procedures for critical functions</p> <p>C train other staff critical functions</p> <p>C develop and distribute contact list for contractors who can repair sewer line breaks</p> <p>C develop and distribute contact list for septic haulers</p>	<p>C require qualified operators to work remote from each other and from other staff to the extent possible</p> <p>C standard operating procedure</p> <p>C standard operating procedure</p>
<p>police protection</p>	<p>adequate service coverage</p>	<p>C contact RCMP to verify that they have a pandemic plan</p>	<p>C standard operating procedure</p>
<p>fire protection</p>	<p>adequate service coverage</p>	<p>C contact Crossroads Rural Community Fire Company to verify that they have a pandemic plan</p>	<p>C standard operating procedure</p>

Service	Requirements to Continue Services	Pre-Pandemic Actions	Pandemic Actions
emergency response	<p>availability of EOC personnel (staff, RCMP, Fire Company and two citizen members)</p> <p>availability of Emergency Operations Centre (EOC located in Town Centre)</p>	<p>C develop priority list for vaccination when it becomes available</p> <p>C educate EOC members about proper hygiene and ways to avoid getting the flu</p> <p>C develop and distribute contact list for Town Centre building maintenance, cleaning, snow clearing etc. to all staff</p>	<p>C notify EOC members when pandemic plan is activated and ask them to isolate themselves and take precautions as much as possible</p> <p>C standard operating procedure</p>
communication	communication with residents, business , staff and stakeholders	<p>C develop employee contact list (email for home and office, telephone contacts and telephone tree)</p> <p>C develop media contact list, mechanism to use sign board, email list and web site)</p> <p>C develop contact information for partners</p>	<p>C regular updates to employees via email (CAO or designate)</p> <p>C regular updates to residents via media, sign board, email list and web site (Mayor or designate)</p> <p>C regular updates with clients and other stakeholders (CAO or designate)</p>

Service	Requirements to Continue Services	Pre-Pandemic Actions	Pandemic Actions
<i>Service Priority Number 2 - High Priority</i>			
sidewalks	sidewalk snow removal sidewalk maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C contact service provider to verify that they have a pandemic plan C develop and distribute list of alternate providers if necessary C designate and train staff on use of snow removal equipment C develop and distribute contact list for repair contractors and distribute to all staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C standard operating procedure C implement back up plan, if necessary C standard operating procedure
Town buildings	building cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C contact service provider to verify that they have a pandemic plan C develop and distribute list of alternate providers if necessary C stock up on hand cleaner and disinfectant wipes and sprays C develop protocol for additional cleaning of common shared surfaces and train cleaning staff, maintenance staff and gym supervisors on protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C implement pandemic cleaning protocol C implement back up plan, if necessary

Service	Requirements to Continue Services	Pre-Pandemic Actions	Pandemic Actions
	building maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C document procedures for critical functions C train other staff on critical functions C develop and distribute contact list for repair contractors and distribute to all staff C contact alarm monitoring company to verify that they have a pandemic plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C standard operating procedure C implement back up plan, if necessary
Town property	<p>property maintenance</p> <p>snow removal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C document procedures for critical functions C train other staff on critical functions C develop and distribute contact list for repair contractors and distribute to all staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C contact service provider to verify that they have a pandemic plan C develop and distribute list of alternate providers if necessary C designate and train staff on use of snow removal equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C standard operating procedure C implement back up plan, if necessary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> C standard operating procedure C implement back up plan, if necessary

Service	Requirements to Continue Services	Pre-Pandemic Actions	Pandemic Actions
public transit	service contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C contact service provider to verify that they have a pandemic plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C standard operating procedure
finance	accounting and payroll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C identify critical functions and ensure staff are trained on these functions C verify bank pandemic preparedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C standard operating procedure with back up staff if necessary
administration	staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C develop and distribute a list of staff for reception back up C develop and distribute list of employees in charge of Town operations in the event of sickness (decision tree) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C declare pandemic plan activated C implement decision tree
human resources	staff support and assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C contact EAP service provider to verify that they have a pandemic plan C develop and distribute list of alternate providers if necessary C distribute EAP contact information to staff C share personal contact information with all staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C enact staff buddy system

Service	Requirements to Continue Services	Pre-Pandemic Actions	Pandemic Actions
	pandemic preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C designate someone to check on staff who are ill to ensure they have their needs met (buddy system) C develop plan to educate staff about a pandemic C develop and distribute information about personal hygiene to avoid the spread of the virus C develop a plan to have staff clean common shared surfaces during a pandemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C implement pandemic cleaning plan
Stratford Seniors Facility	<p>maintenance contract</p> <p>tenant support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C designate staff as back up and provide contact information to appropriate authorities C develop plan to provide pandemic information and assistance for tenants if necessary during a pandemic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C provide back up, if necessary C implement tenant communication plan
computer network and systems	computer service contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C contact service provider to verify that they have a pandemic plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C standard operating procedure

Service	Requirements to Continue Services	Pre-Pandemic Actions	Pandemic Actions
	spare part inventory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C develop back up plan for continued computer system operation if necessary C identify critical components and determine if they are easily available during a pandemic or purchase them if not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C implement back up plan, if necessary C standard operating procedure
<i>Service Priority Number 3 - Medium Priority</i>			
recreation facilities	booking and set up equipment maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C designate and train additional staff on booking and set up C designate and train additional staff on equipment maintenance C develop protocol for additional cleaning of common shared surfaces and train cleaning staff, maintenance staff and gym supervisors on protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C standard operating procedure with back up staff if necessary C standard operating procedure with back up staff if necessary
parks and playing fields	equipment maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C designate and train additional staff on equipment maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C standard operating procedure with back up staff if necessary

Service	Requirements to Continue Services	Pre-Pandemic Actions	Pandemic Actions
special events	staff and volunteers	C normal operating procedures	C standard operating procedure
development control	application and information	C normal operating procedures	C standard operating procedure
electricity/street lighting	Maritime Electric	C verify Maritime Electric pandemic preparedness	C standard operating procedure
<i>Service Priority Number 4 - Low Priority</i>			
adult programs	staff and volunteers	C normal operating procedures	C standard operating procedure
seniors programs	staff and volunteers	C normal operating procedures	C standard operating procedure
youth programs	staff and volunteers	C normal operating procedures	C standard operating procedure
long term planning	staff	C normal operating procedures	C standard operating procedure
animal control	P.E.I. Humane Society	C normal operating procedures	C standard operating procedure
non emergency resident complaints	staff	C normal operating procedures	C standard operating procedure

Service	Requirements to Continue Services	Pre-Pandemic Actions	Pandemic Actions
Economic development/business park	staff	C normal operating procedures	C standard operating procedure
Sustainability		C normal operating procedures	C standard operating procedure

6. Employee Impact and Actions

As indicated in the various sections of Section 5, employees will very likely be impacted in various ways during a pandemic including worrying about loved ones, dealing with sickness, taking on added responsibility, protecting themselves and others from the spread of the flu.

- a. If a flu pandemic is declared, employees will be required to take the following actions:
 - C stay at home if you have flu symptoms. Permanent employees can use their sick leave for this and sick leave will be advanced to employees without a sufficient sick leave bank. Causal employees will be guaranteed that any lost hours will be made up at the end of the work term.
 - C report any sickness that is flu related.
 - C cancel and leave or professional development activity, in consultation with your supervisor, if you are required to assist with the provision of priority services.

- C perform work remotely, in consultation with your supervisor, where possible.
 - C curtail contact with other employees and members of the public to the extent possible (i.e. avoid lunch breaks, face to face meetings etc. - social distancing)
 - C practice proper hygiene to prevent the spread of illness in accordance with recommended practices issued by the Town.
 - C be vaccinated against the pandemic flu virus when it becomes available unless you have a valid medical or human rights reason to refuse the vaccine.
- b. During a flu pandemic, employees may experience worry, stress, grief, trauma, fear, isolation, financial stress etc. Just as the employees have a responsibility to the Town to perform their duties diligently and provide services to residents, so too does the Town have a responsibility for the health and safety of its' employees. To help employees deal with a pandemic, the Town will:
- C provide access to counseling for employees and their family members through the Town's Employee Assistance Program service provider.
 - C communicate regularly with employees on the status of the pandemic situation.
 - C establish a buddy system to ensure someone is checking on sick employees and their family members to ensure their basic needs are met and this will be considered part of their duties during a declared pandemic.
 - C develop an information flyer for employees and their family members on flu symptoms, how to avoid spreading the flu, EAP contact information etc.

7. Communications Plan

As in any crisis situation, communication with employees, residents, partners and other stakeholders is critical to reducing fear and panic and ensuring smooth operations. In the event a flu pandemic is declared, the following actions will be carried out:

- Ⓒ declare a pandemic and implement this plan (CAO or designate)
- Ⓒ Liaison with Provincial EMO, Chief Health Officer's office (CAO or designate)
- Ⓒ regular updates to employees via email (CAO or designate, see Section 5)
- Ⓒ regular updates to residents (Mayor or designate, see Section 5 See Section 5)
- Ⓒ regular updates with clients and other stakeholders (CAO or designate, see Section 5)