

Media Release

Date: December 15, 2020

Mayor's Message

Dear residents of Pembroke,

As we approach the holiday season, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight how important it is that we remain vigilant in the fight against COVID-19. It is more important than ever to follow public health guidelines and wear a mask, wash your hands frequently, maintain physical distancing with those outside of your home, stay home if you are sick, and get tested if you develop symptoms.

The Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) has issued a travel advisory, encouraging residents of Renfrew County to stay home this holiday season and celebrate only with members of their own household. The RCDHU has put out some helpful information regarding [holiday safety guidance](#), [holiday gathering recommendations](#), and [at-home holiday activity ideas](#). I understand that not seeing family and friends this holiday season will be difficult for everyone, but it is essential for our collective safety.

We are well into the second wave of COVID-19. As Dr. Cushman of the Health Unit has said, symptoms of COVID-19 can mimic many other sicknesses, so if you are sick, stay home, and let health professionals make your diagnosis. As we have seen in Renfrew County recently, the virus can spread quickly if we are not vigilant. Getting your flu shot is also especially important this year. I would like to thank all of Pembroke's citizens for continuing to do what is required in order to keep our community safe during these challenging times.

Our Parks and Recreation Department have been busy planning activities to help you celebrate the holidays safely. The Township of Laurentian Valley, Town of Petawawa, Township of Whitewater Region, and City of Pembroke have partnered to host Light Up The Valley. You can visit [PURE Country 96.7](#) to see a list and map of houses that are lit up this holiday season. On December 19th, starting at 4:00 p.m. Santa Claus will be in Pembroke! Santa will be driving around the streets of Pembroke to wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season. The Pembroke Fire Department will be leading the way so watch out for flashing lights to know Santa is near. You can see Santa's route on this [map](#). Be sure to follow all public health guidelines while waving to Santa from your driveway, sidewalk, or window.

As you gear up for the holiday season, I strongly encourage you to shop local! It is wonderful to see how many people have already been supporting our local businesses during this holiday season. You really can find the perfect gift for anyone on your list here in Pembroke. Downtown Pembroke is hosting a Christmas Tree Draw where you can win for shopping local until December 21. All you need is a shopping passport,

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which you can get at most stores, you collect a stamp for every \$10 you spend at participating Downtown businesses. Get 10 stamps and enter to win a Christmas tree and gifts valued at over \$2,000. While you are downtown, be sure to take a tour of all of the beautifully decorated store windows. This pandemic has not been easy on our local business community, so I strongly encourage everyone to shop local and support our businesses in a safe manner.

We have now hosted two Mayor's Diversity Roundtable meetings where we have sought feedback from local residents and stakeholders. Many of the stories of racism and discrimination that I have heard from our region are incredibly upsetting. In Pembroke, we are taking the next step forward by creating an official Diversity Advisory Committee to report to City Council. Applications to join this committee will be open early in the New Year, and we hope that all interested residents apply. I look forward to the assistance of the committee in helping us make Pembroke a safe, diverse and welcoming community for everyone.

In closing, I would like to emphasize how important it is to know that we are very much still in the middle of a pandemic. We absolutely must remain vigilant if we want to combat the spread of COVID-19. 2020 has not been an easy year for anyone, and it is so important that we remain strong. I would like to wish all Pembroke residents a safe and happy holiday season! While we cannot be together in person, let us be together in spirit and remain patient and understanding with one another, as the only way to get through this is together.

For COVID-19 testing dates and times visit the Renfrew Virtual Triage Assessment Centre (VTAC) [testing schedule](#) or call VTAC at 1-844-727-6404 to book an appointment for testing. For regularly updated information on the pandemic from a local, provincial, and federal level, please visit the City's [2019 Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) webpage](#).

Thank you, and have a safe and happy holiday season.

Mayor Mike LeMay

For further information on COVID-19, please refer to the following sources:

[The City of Pembroke COVID-19 Updates and Info](#)

[The City of Pembroke COVID-19 Business Resources](#)

[Renfrew County and District Health Unit](#)

[Health Canada](#)



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