



COVID-19: Guidance for Safe Community Gardening

Community gardens promote access to fresh produce while providing a sense of connection and belonging. Some community members have a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. It is suggested that members of each community garden discuss what strategies may work best for them, so that all gardeners feel safe and included. This guidance document provides community gardens in Curve Lake and Hiawatha First Nations, and the County and City of Peterborough, with suggestions to reduce risk of COVID-19 transmission. Please visit www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca for up-to-date information about risk and transmission in our communities.

Self-Screen Before Coming to the Garden. Stay Home if Ill.

- Before coming to the garden, you are encouraged to complete the [Ontario self-assessment tool](#) and follow the direction provided. Community gardens can also post signage for [passive screening](#) at the entrance of the garden.

Maintain physical distancing.

- Community gardens can be set up to encourage physical distancing. This could be done in a variety of ways, including:
 - Post a maximum capacity for the garden area.
 - Use a scheduling or sign-in systems to limit the number of people in the garden at once.
 - Post physical distancing signage.

Use masks when physical distancing is not possible.

- Mask should be worn when physical distancing is challenging, unless there is a medical exemption from wearing one.
- Children over the age of 2 years should wear a mask if they are unable to maintain a 2-metre distance from others who are not from their household.
- Medical masks or respirators (e.g., N95 mask) should be worn when individuals are in crowded spaces, with limited ventilation. Please visit Peterborough Public Health's [Masks and PPE](#) webpage to learn more.

Clean your hands.

Hand washing is encouraged for everyone entering and leaving the garden by using one of the following methods:

- Hand wipes to remove debris, followed by alcohol-based hand sanitizer (containing at least 60% alcohol). Choose a hand sanitizer approved for sale by Health Canada (that has a DIN or NPN).
- Sink equipped with hot and cold running water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Temporary handwashing station, using an insulated container with warm water (and a spigot), liquid soap, paper towels and a bucket to collect waste water. This should be used only if there is a way to dispose of the wastewater (e.g., into a sink or toilet). Wastewater must not be disposed of directly on the ground. If the garden has a sink onsite, this should be used for handwashing.

Keep Surfaces Clean.

- Avoid sharing tools, if possible, and incorporate an appropriate cleaning routine to regularly disinfect shared, frequently touched surfaces. Use a [disinfectant approved by Health Canada to be effective against the COVID-19 virus](#) or a bleach-water solution. For all disinfectants, follow manufacturer's directions, including contact time.
- To prepare a bleach-water solution, add 4 teaspoons of bleach per litre of water; the solution must be prepared daily. Allow a contact time of at least 45 seconds before wiping away the disinfectant, or allow it to evaporate. Vinegar is not an approved disinfectant as it is not effective against pathogens such as the COVID-19 virus.

Working Together to Promote Safety and Inclusion

Some gardeners may have a higher risk of severe illness due to COVID-19, or may have vulnerable loved ones. It is important for gardeners to work together to make sure that everyone feels safe and included. This can be done by working together to choose strategies that work best for members of your community garden.

Thank you for helping to keep community gardens healthy and safe.