

**Tuesday March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020**



*For immediate release from the Council of the RM of Blaine Lake #434:*

This has been an unprecedented past week, in terms of protecting the public, market volatility, travel uncertainty and fear. This is due to the rapidly changing issues worldwide caused by the COVID-19 virus being at large and infecting the public at large. Current headlines paint a picture of a world where uncertainty and fear are the dominant themes. There is no shortage of questions surrounding COVID-19 virus and how it has the potential to touch all aspects of our lives – personal and professional. The coronavirus (COVID-19) was declared a global pandemic this past Wednesday by the World Health Organization.<sup>1</sup>

Our hearts and thoughts go out to the people who have been affected by this unprecedented event and we appreciate and support the health-care workers, first responders, our provincial government, and our health region who are on the front line working to contain this coronavirus threat. Please know that we are vigilantly monitoring the COVID-19 situation around the clock and have precautions in place to ensure a healthy environment for the residents and our staff through this period of uncertainty and fear.

Over the past few weeks, and particularly this last week, the council of the RM of Blaine Lake has researched and obtained critical and current information about the impact in and on the community about this COVID-19 virus. Like you, the Council have questions about what is going on around us, so we thought we would write to you directly, to all ratepayers and residents of the RM of Blaine Lake with our thoughts, and outline the actions we are taking to help all of our residents navigate through this environment.

First and foremost, we want you to know that our Council and Staff are here to support and help anyone in the RM impacted. That is why we have decided to initiate the following precautions **EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY and until further notice:**<sup>2</sup>

- 1) Suspension of the upcoming April Rate Payers Meeting.
- 2) Closing of the office and Municipal Works shop *to the Public until further notice.*
- 3) Upon Ministerial approval, delay and postponement of the upcoming Division 3 By-Election.
- 4) Suggestion by your council to have the Blaine Lake Clinic designated, for a certain period of the week, as a COVID-19 test centre.
- 5) Your Council will be reworking the preliminary budget in lieu of the possible economic impact of COVID-19 to the family farm income.
- 6) Your Council at this point is seeking cutting costs and services rather than increasing taxes for the upcoming year.

At face these appear as knee jerk reactions; however, the facts are that not only the majority of council, but a good demographic of the ratepayer and resident population fit the profile of those most susceptible to this illness and the effects. The statistic that has accelerated the RM Council into action: *31% of cases are 60 years old and over.*<sup>3</sup> The Rural Municipality of Blaine Lake #434 is going to err on the side of caution and enact these 6 directives in hope of saving health distress and possibly death.

**At this time, please visit our website for updates or communicate with our office via:**

**Phone: (306) 497-2282      Fax: (306) 497-2423**

**Email: [rm434@sasktel.net](mailto:rm434@sasktel.net)      Website: <https://blainelake.ca/rm/>**

**You may also utilize our drop box on-site at: 118 Main Street, Blaine Lake.**

**Or, our mailing address: Box 38, Blaine Lake, SK, S0J 0J0**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/health-professionals/mass-gatherings-risk-assesment.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>