

Stowe Town Manager's Statement on COVID-19

March 17, 2020

The World, the United States, Vermont and the Town of Stowe are facing extra-ordinary circumstances with the onset of COVID-19. The Town of Stowe, like the rest of the Vermont, is following the emergency directives of the Governor of Vermont and the recommendations of the Vermont Department of Health. A link to the Vermont Department of Health can be found at the [Stowe Public Safety website](#) (<http://dps.stowevt.gov/covid-19/>), along with other website links that may be useful.

This past Sunday, our Town Manager, safety and health officers, public officials, our state representative, representatives of the business community, the Stowe Area Association, Copley Hospital and CHSLV (Community Health Services of Lamoille Valley) met and have agreed to work closely together and share information.

For general information about COVID-19, you can dial 2-1-1. If you are sick or concerned about your health and whether you have symptoms that require COVID-19 testing, contact your health care provider by phone. It is requested that you avoid going to the hospital and where possible, that you call in advance. Local hospitals include [Copley Hospital](#) in Morrisville, VT and [UVM Medical Center](#) in Burlington, VT.

If you have a non-emergency situation you may contact the Stowe Town Offices at 253-7350 and we will try to put you in contact with someone that may be able to assist you. Of course, if you have any bona-fide emergency you need to call 911.

Temporary Limited Services

The Town Hall and other municipal offices will be closed to the public except where necessary by appointment when time is of the essence (e.g. title research for a closing, marriage license). All department head email addresses and phone numbers may be found at our municipal website (www.townofstowevt.org). The main phone number to the building is 253-7350. There is a slot in the front door of the Akeley Building (Town Hall) at 67 Main Street where bills and other correspondence may be left. In addition, items may be mailed to PO Box 730, Stowe, VT 05672. Until we are ordered otherwise by the Governor, staff will be working as available to continue processing information.

The Stowe Public Safety Facility will be closed to the public and all personnel who are not on duty. If you have an emergency, call 911. If you do not have an emergency, you may call the police non-emergency number at 253-7126. There is a phone to reach the Stowe Public Safety Agencies (Police, Fire, EMS and Mountain Rescue) directly inside the foyer entrance to the building. Non-essential police services are suspended, such as fingerprinting and vehicle VIN checks.

We ask that you self-regulate and don't ask to come into the municipal buildings unless necessary. We are trying to protect the public and our essential employees, so that we can remain operational.

Temporary Municipal Closures

As of the end of the day on Tuesday, the Stowe Free Library, Stowe Recreation Programs and the Stowe Arena will be closed until further notice. Also, other than the Development Review Board, all municipal public body meetings have been cancelled through April 5th or until otherwise may become necessary unless a special meeting is called for emergency circumstances or where otherwise time is of the

essence. If a meeting is necessary, steps such as social distancing will be implemented. These steps were taken in order to help protect the public and our employees by limiting group gatherings and unnecessary exposure. It is also meant to recognize some public officials and employees may not be available for a variety of reasons. Additionally, the restricting of non-essential business enables the Town to focus its resources on the essential services of emergency management and public works.

Emergency Operations Center

Chief Kyle Walker is Stowe's Local Health Officer and Emergency Management Director. He is in touch with Vermont Emergency Management and the Department of Health. The Town is following the lead of the State and has not found a need to open the Stowe Emergency Operations Center at this time. If we do, the Town does have an adopted emergency operations plan and team. Although we have not experienced anything like the current pandemic, Stowe's EOC consists of trained personnel to help guide us and respond at the municipal level should it become necessary to do so.

Please Register for the new Text/Email Alert System

The Town has recently shifted to using the State's VT-Alert system. The alert system offers relevant, localized information related to public safety sent directly to you through phone, text or email notifications. In order to get these important alerts we need you to sign up! Please go to <https://member.everbridge.net/index/453003085617457#/signup> in order to register! There is a direct link to this on the town website.

Visitor and Business Information Links:

Stowe Area Association's website offers resources and information for businesses and employees during this time. You can find the relevant information at <https://gostowe.com/stowe-business-community-updates>. Stowe Area Association also has compiled links for visitors to get COVID – 19 information at <https://gostowe.com/stowe-travel-update>.

Our Community in Action

In the spirit of community, a local volunteer group is being organized to supplement the in-place resources that support our vulnerable population. If you are interested in volunteering and are not a member of an at-risk population yourself, you can email Heidi Scheuermann at Heidi@heidischeuermann.com to add your name to the list.

A number of our local businesses have already closed, are in the process of closing or experiencing significantly reduced revenues. Buying gift certificates on-line can help these businesses bridge their cash flow needs and let them know that we support them.

In closing, there are many ways that we can help each other. We can follow the guidelines provided by the experts, we can volunteer to help those in need following best practices of washing our hands and social distancing, and we can remember to let people know we care about them and they are not alone. In the digital age, social distancing does not have to mean social isolation.

Charles Safford