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From: CLRInfo
Sent: August 13, 2021 8:30 AM
To: Ken McCormack
Cc: Maria Sushkova
Subject: COVID-19, Wildfire Situation and Heat Warning Update - Aug 13

Importance: High

[CLR Members,](#)

Please find the recent updates on the current situation in the province.

[Heat wave warning](#)

The Province is reaffirming to British Columbians that the health authorities, Emergency Management BC (EMBC) and BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) remain geared up and ready to help people through another heat wave.

Temperatures are again expected to rise in the next 24 to 48 hours, lasting until Sunday, Aug. 15. In this extraordinary heat, British Columbians should continue to take steps to keep cool and stay safe from smoke. Many parts of the province will continue to experience poor air quality from wildfires.

Those who are unable to move to cooling centres (the elderly, people who live alone or have impaired mobility) are at greatest risk. Check with friends and family who may need assistance in managing a heat wave.

People throughout B.C. may also be at risk of smoke-related illness through exposure to smoke caused by ongoing wildfires.

People are encouraged to reduce their exposure and seek cleaner air by using a portable HEPA air filter in homes, visit public spaces such as community centres or libraries that will have cleaner, cooler indoor air, and take it easy on smoky days. Elevated heat also increases the risk of wildfire, and British Columbians are being urged to do their part to prevent human-caused wildfires and help keep communities safe. To report a wildfire, unattended campfire or open burning violation, call 1 800 663-5555, toll-free, or *5555 on a cellphone.

Learn More:

For tips on how to stay safe during a heat wave, visit:
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021HLTH0136-001486>

Environment Canada Public Weather Alerts for B.C.:
https://weather.gc.ca/warnings/index_e.html?prov=bc

HealthLinkBC online resources about beating the heat:
<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/beat-the-heat>

And heat-related illness: www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/heat-related-illness

And heat stroke symptoms: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/sig245455>

And warm weather safety in a time of COVID-19: <http://www.bccdc.ca/about/news-stories/stories/2020/warm-weather-safety-in-a-time-of-covid-19>

BC Wildfire Service: www.bcwildfire.ca

Fire restrictions and bans: <https://www.gov.bc.ca/wildfirebans>

FireSmart program: www.firesmartbc.ca

PreparedBC: www.preparedbc.ca/wildfires

WorkSafeBC: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/hazards-exposures/heat-stress?origin=s&returnurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.worksafebc.com%2Fen%2Fsearch%23sort%3DRelevancy%26q%3Dheat%2520stress%26f%3Alanguage-facet%3D%5BEnglish%5D&highlight=heat%20stress>

B.C. wildfires: quick statistics

The wildfire situation is continually evolving, and the information below is current as of 7 p.m. (Pacific time) on Wednesday, Aug. 11, 2021. For real-time updates on evacuation alerts and orders, visit:

<https://twitter.com/EmergencyInfoBC>

For the latest wildfire information, visit: www.bcwildfire.ca

Fires

- Wildfires currently burning in B.C.: 264
- Since April 1, 2021:
 - 1,472 wildfires
 - 656,445 hectares of area burned
- Active fires by fire centre:
 - Cariboo: 33
 - Coastal: 21
 - Kamloops: 84
 - Northwest: 5
 - Prince George: 58
 - Southeast: 63

Resources

- Firefighters and other personnel currently fighting the fires: 3,725
- Out-of-province firefighters: 439
- Helicopters and planes supporting ground crews: 207

Supports available

- To help people and communities manage and recover from the impacts of wildfires, the Province has assembled a list of the key resources people may need. Visit www.EmergencyInfoBC.ca and click on “recovery and supports” for more information.

B.C. COVID-19 pandemic update

As of Thursday, Aug. 12, 2021, 82.3% (3,814,635) of eligible people 12 and older in B.C. have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine and 71.6% (3,318,751) received their second dose.

In addition, 83.1% (3,596,148) of all eligible adults in B.C. have received their first dose and 73.3% (3,168,620) received their second dose.

B.C. is reporting 513 new cases of COVID-19, including one epi-linked case, for a total of 154,362 cases in the province.

There are 3,834 active cases of COVID-19 in the province, and 148,702 people who tested positive have recovered. Of the active cases, 81 individuals are in hospital and 33 are in intensive care. The remaining people are recovering at home in self-isolation.

Since December 2020, the Province has administered 7,141,196 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines.

Learn More:

For the Aug. 12, 2021, announcement on mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for long-term care workers, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/25143>

For new health measures in the Central Okanagan, visit:

https://www.interiorhealth.ca/AboutUs/MediaCentre/NewsReleases/Documents/IB_COVID_Outbreak_6%20August.pdf

People throughout B.C. can find their nearest Vax for BC event online by visiting: www.gov.bc.ca/VaxForBC

For information on breakthrough cases, visit: http://news.gov.bc.ca/files/7-27_breakthrough_cases.pdf

Or see the BC Centre for Disease Control's (BCCDC) weekly data summary: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data#summary>

Detailed data is posted daily on the BCCDC dashboard: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data> or: www.bccdc.ca

To register to be immunized or to learn about getting your second dose,

visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/getvaccinated.html> or: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/dose-2>

To learn about BC's Restart plan, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restart>

For recent modelling, visit: http://news.gov.bc.ca/files/6-28_PHO_presentation.pdf

For the provincial health officer's orders and guidance, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

For guidance on restrictions, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/restrictions>

For COVID-19 exposure events, updates and information, visit:

- BCCDC: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/public-exposures>
- Fraser Health: fraserhealth.ca/covid19exposure
- Interior Health: <https://news.interiorhealth.ca/news/public-exposures/>
- Island Health: <https://www.islandhealth.ca/learn-about-health/covid-19/outbreaks-and-exposures>
- Northern Health: <https://www.northernhealth.ca/health-topics/outbreaks-and-exposures>
- Vancouver Coastal Health: <http://www.vch.ca/covid-19/public-exposures>

Mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for long-term care and seniors' assisted living workers

Public Health is taking an important step to address recent breakthrough COVID-19 cases in long-term care facilities, making it mandatory for all health-care workers in care homes to be fully vaccinated from COVID-19 by Oct. 12, 2021.

Early in the pandemic, public health officials identified people living in long-term care and seniors' assisted living as particularly vulnerable to severe outcomes from COVID-19. In response, the Province took action to protect seniors and keep people safe and healthy.

New public health requirements around vaccinations will add protections for people in long-term care. People living and working in long-term care and seniors' assisted living were among the first to receive first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccinations in B.C.'s vaccination rollout. All long-term care and assisted living residents and workers have now been offered both doses of COVID-19 vaccine.

Canada getting vaccine passport for international travel

The federal government says it plans to create proof-of-vaccination documentation for international travel by early fall. Immigration Minister Marco Mendicino said on August 11 that Ottawa is working with the provinces to develop consistent credentials. The minister said the government is also working with other countries to recognize the credentials issued in Canada.

The federal certification would include data on the type of vaccines received, dates and location.

"For Canadians who decide to travel, using a proof of vaccination will provide foreign border officials with the vaccination history needed to assess whether a traveller meets their public health requirements and provide a trusted and verifiable credential for when they return home," says a government release.

Intergovernmental Affairs Minister Dominic LeBlanc said the government expects the credentials to be digital but will also make it available for those without access to a device.

The federal announcement comes in the middle of a debate as some provinces talk about introducing domestic proof of vaccination.

In Quebec, beginning in September, anyone wanting to visit non-essential businesses like bars, restaurants, gyms and festivals will need to present a scannable QR code through a smartphone app to prove they've been fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Manitoba has been issuing proof-of-immunization cards to residents who are two weeks past their second shot.

Alberta Premier Jason Kenney, meanwhile, continues to insist his province will not introduce proof-of-vaccination documentation. "We've been very clear from the beginning that we will not facilitate or accept vaccine passports," Kenney told reporters last month. "I believe they would in principle contravene the Health Information Act and also possibly the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act."

U.S. eases COVID-19 travel advisory for Canada — but no word on border reopening

As of August 9, fully vaccinated American citizens and permanent residents of the United States may enter Canada for non-essential travel without being subject to a quarantine period for the first time since March of 2020.

Travellers entering Canada will be required to show a negative molecular test taken within 72 hours of the time of crossing and register their vaccination status using the ArriveCAN app or corresponding web portal. Meeting these requirements will exempt travellers from quarantine, hotel stopover, and day-8 testing requirements. The border reopening is expected to extend to international travellers from outside of the United States on September 7 provided they qualify under the same conditions. [Read more.](#)

At the same time, the U.S. State Department has lowered the COVID-19 travel advisory for Canada to "Level 2 Exercise Increased Caution," according to a statement on Tuesday. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also eased Canada's travel recommendation rating to Level 2.

Despite the change, the U.S. government shows no sign of easing restrictions for Canadian tourists, who are barred from entering United States land borders. The U.S. travel restrictions for non-essential travelers at the Canadian and Mexican land borders are set to expire on Aug. 21 but are likely to again be renewed.

The State Department also said the advisory for several countries, including Vietnam, Austria and Kenya, was raised to "Level 3 – Reconsider Travel."

The CDC warned on Monday against travel to Israel, France, Thailand, Iceland and several other countries because of a rising number of infections in those places.

The State Department also issued its parallel "Level 4: Do Not Travel" advisories for Iceland and France on Monday and confirmed on Tuesday it was adding Israel to that list. As recently as last month, Israel was listed at "Level 1" by the U.S. government agencies before being hiked by two levels.

B.C. to reduce interval between COVID-19 vaccine doses to four weeks

B.C.'s top doctor said Monday the province is reducing the interval between doses of COVID-19 vaccines from 49 days down to 28 days. Provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry said invites will be sent to about 170,000 people in the coming days. Henry urged people living in areas experiencing an outbreak to get a second dose as soon as possible. Those who do not live in a hot spot are recommended to wait at least 6 to 8 weeks between doses since it can provide better protection.

The announcement comes amid a rise in COVID-19 cases in the province, particularly in the central Okanagan. The interval between doses had already been reduced in that region in an effort to get residents immunized more quickly. Henry said the surge has been fuelled by people between the ages of 20 and 40 who are unvaccinated or have only had one dose.

Outdoor gatherings are limited once again to 50 people and indoor events have been reduced to five extra people, plus those in the household. Nightclubs and bars are closed and liquor cut-off is at 10 p.m. at restaurants.

Officials have also asked people who intend to travel to the area to try to change their plans.

[Moderna to sign agreement to build mRNA production plant in Canada](#)

Massachusetts-based drug maker Moderna will build an mRNA vaccine manufacturing plant in Canada within the next two years, CEO Stephane Bancel said Tuesday.

The company has signed a memorandum of understanding with the federal government that will result in Canada becoming the home of Moderna's first foreign operation. It's not clear yet how much money Canada has offered to Moderna for the project.

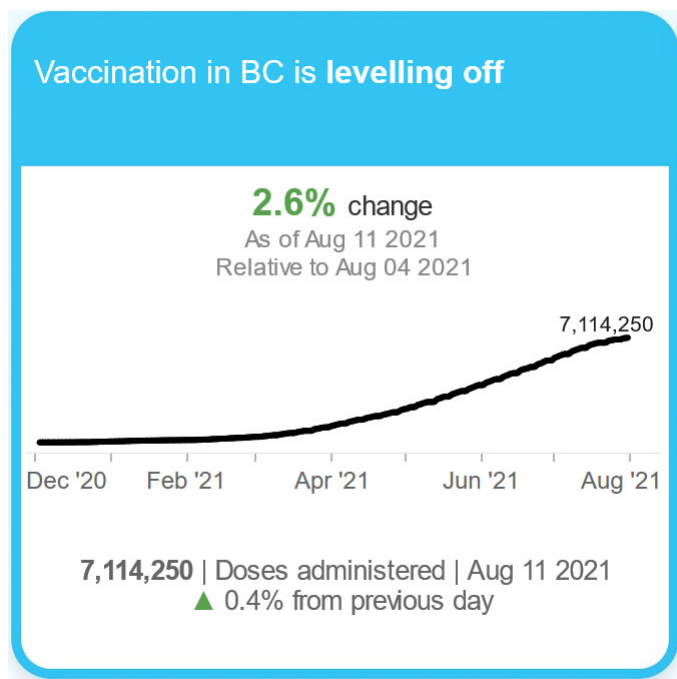
The agreement will see Canada gain access to Moderna's mRNA "development engine" and get priority access to the doses. Bancel said Canada can also ask Moderna to shift its production lines to respond to a new or emerging threat. The agreement will also include a research and development component for COVID-19 and a host of other conditions, including flu, heart disease, cancer and rare genetic disorders.

The location of the new facility hasn't been finalized, but Bancel said the availability of an educated workforce will be the main deciding factor. He said the design is done and they'll need to start hiring very soon so training can begin.

Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine, one of two messenger RNA or mRNA vaccines currently authorized, is one of the most effective thus far against the virus that causes COVID-19. Bancel said recent results showed it is almost as effective after six months as it was after two.

This is the second major deal Ottawa has made to get mRNA vaccines made in Canada in the last three months.

[Immunization dashboard](#)



Stay safe.

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