

# Township of Tiny COVID-19 Community Garden Guidelines

The Township of Tiny has implemented COVID-19 operating procedures and guidelines that gardeners must meet in order to operate and keep everyone safe. These guidelines align with best practices provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. This document is for municipal staff, volunteers and garden users to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19, while using a shared garden space.

Before entry to the garden, all registered gardeners must review, sign and abide by these COVID-19 guidelines. Any contraventions to these guidelines will result in a cancelled contract and the annual fee forfeited.

*These guidelines will be in place until further notice.*

## **Garden Access:**

- Gardens are closed to the public. Gardens can be accessed by registered gardeners, volunteers and municipal staff only and are for planting, maintaining and harvesting food exclusively.
- No more than 5 gardeners are permitted in the enclosure at all times.

## **Cleaning and Disinfection:**

- Two (2) hand sanitizing stations are located at the entrance gate: one on the inside and one on the outside of the enclosure. Garden users must use hand sanitizer before touching the gate/lock and entering the enclosure. Garden users must use the hand sanitizer before exiting the enclosure and touching the gate and lock to close the facility.
  - If hands are visibly soiled, handwashing with soap and water is preferred. If not available, hands must be wiped clean before applying alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Gardeners must disinfect communal surfaces **before and after** use using disinfectant wipes supplied.
  - Surfaces include: entrance gate, lock, hose and spigot, compost bins.
  - Be sure to remove all dirt and other organic matter from the surface of tools before sanitizing.
  - Make sure tools are dry before sanitizing or the sanitizer will be diluted.

## **Personal Guidelines for Gardeners:**

- Users must self-screen before entering the garden. Screening signs are placed on the entrance gate.
- Anyone who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or has been exposed to the virus must stay at home for 14 days. If unsure, follow the Province's self-assessment tool (<https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>) or visit a local assessment centre. You may contact the Community Engagement Coordinator to arrange for someone to care for your plot while you need to self-isolate.
- Everyone in the garden must maintain physical distancing of 6 feet/2 metres at all times (unless gardening with members of the same household).
- Practice proper hygiene:
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 15 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
  - Sneeze and cough into your sleeve.
  - Avoid touching your face (nose, mouth and eyes) unless you have just washed your hands.
- Anyone displaying symptoms will be given public health contact information and asked to leave.

### ***General Guidelines:***

- Children should only be brought to the garden on an as-needed basis. Children cannot be brought in if they are too young to understand physical distancing and hygiene practices (unless they can be kept in a stroller or are carried in an on-body support). Parents or guardians who bring children to the garden are responsible for following the guidelines and sanitizing any tools the children use.
- Gardeners should plan ahead and minimize the number of trips they make to the garden.
  - Use mulch to reduce the need for watering and weeding.
  - Row covers can control pest invasions when people are not in the garden as frequently to monitor pest activity.
- Communal garden shed and tools are not available for use. Gardeners must bring their own tools and garden gloves.
  - It's encouraged to wash garden gloves at home after use.
  - Personal tools cannot be left at the garden overnight.
  - If necessary, gardeners may request communal garden tools through the Community Engagement Coordinator.

### ***Enforcement:***

- Due to the severity of the circumstances, if garden members do not follow the guidelines, they will be asked to leave the premises. If gardeners continue to disregard the guidelines, their contract will become void, their annual fee forfeited and their garden plot will be reallocated to the first person on the waiting list.
- Garden members may also be fined by bylaw enforcement officers for infractions of emergency measures (such as not maintaining physical distancing).
- The Community Garden will be monitored by the Community Engagement Coordinator, By-Law Staff and/or Public Works Staff.

### ***Township Responsibilities:***

- Community Engagement Coordinator and/or designated garden representative will:
  - Ensure all garden members have signed off on COVID-19 Guidelines, Community Garden Policy and Contract.
  - Post COVID-19 garden guidelines, code of conduct, 'Cover your Cough' signs and emergency numbers inside the garden enclosure.
  - Post screening signs and public notice on entrance gate indicating the garden is closed to the public (only authorized garden members are permitted).
  - Attend the garden twice weekly to fill/replace sanitizers and disinfectant wipes and to sanitize all communal tools and touch points (i.e. gate, locks, compost, hose etc.).
- Public Works staff to install 2 hand sanitizing stations beside entry gate (one on inside and one on outside). If this is not possible, recreation staff will place hand pump sanitizer bottles on the ground.