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NEWS RELEASE
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District of Sooke Municipal Hall re-opens on June 1

Stringent return-to-work pandemic safety guidelines for District of Sooke employees were approved by Sooke council this week as the Municipal Hall reopens to some staff who have been working from home offices since mid March.

The guidelines will ensure that residents are able to safely conduct business when the Municipal Hall reopens to the public on Monday, June 1 in advance of a typically busy period leading to the July 2 property tax deadline.

The Municipal Hall will be open for property tax transactions and drop-off of completed development applications only. Residents who wish to connect with District staff on other business are encouraged to call or email ahead to ensure the safe delivery of customer service.

"For everyone's protection, visitors are asked to be patient and adhere to physical distancing guidelines that have been put in place at the Municipal Hall," says Mayor Maja Tait. "Only two people will be welcomed into the reception area at a time. Residents are encouraged to file the Home Owner Grant and pay their taxes online."

Property tax notices are expected to reach Sooke mailboxes the week of June 1. Included with the notices are instructions for claiming Home Owner Grants and a list of various payment options.

The District's Return to Work Policy and complimentary set of operational procedures are based on Sooke-specific best practices as well as COVID-19 workplace templates developed by the Provincial Health Officer, the BC Ministry of Health, WorkSafe BC, the Canadian Coast Guard, and the City of Richmond.

Sooke's policy is being utilized as a model by the BC Municipal Safety Association as it advises local governments across the province on how best to proceed in phase two of BC's Restart Plan. "We got an early start on developing a policy and we've been happy to share it with organizations developing safe workplace practices for their own employees," said Sooke Chief Administrative Officer Norm McInnis.

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