

Daily Update – 11 February 2021

Ontario Extends Off-Peak Electricity Rates to Provide Relief for Families, Small Businesses and Farms

The Ontario government is extending electricity rate relief while the province maintains the Stay-at-Home Order in the majority of public health regions. The government will continue to hold electricity prices to the off-peak rate of 8.5 cents per kilowatt-hour until February 22, 2021. This lower rate is available 24 hours per day, seven days a week for Time-Of-Use and tiered customers.

Canada United grants up to \$5,000 available starting February 16th

Created by RBC, [Canada United](#) is a movement to support local businesses in communities across the country. The Canada United Small Business Relief Fund (CUSBRF) was established to help small businesses offset the cost of expenses to open safely or adopt digital technologies to move more of their business online.

Applications will be open again for all provinces and territories on February 16, 2021 at 1 p.m. EST.

If you have already applied but have not heard from us yet, you should be contacted by February 15, 2021. If you can't find an answer to your question, feel free to contact cusbrf@occ.ca.

Ontario postponing March Break to mid-April

Ontario Education Minister Stephen Lecce says the province is postponing March Break to the week of April 12, saying at a news conference on Thursday the move is intended to keep students safe and limit community spread of COVID-19. Lecce said postponing rather than cancelling the break is "an important way that schools can help to limit community transmission" of the coronavirus and its variants of concern.

Deliveries of COVID-19 vaccine doses to Canada set to more than quadruple next week

Canada's COVID-19 vaccine deliveries should ramp up next week, with the single biggest shipment of vaccines from Pfizer and BioNTech to date and almost two million doses expected in the next month.

Moderna's next shipment on Feb. 22 will now be only two-thirds of what it was supposed to be. Pfizer's deliveries will only meet the promised number of doses if medical professionals can adjust to extracting six doses instead of five from every vial.

Maj.-Gen. Dany Fortin, the military commander overseeing Canada's vaccine distribution, says Pfizer has confirmed it will ship 403,000 doses next week, 475,000 the week after that, and then 444,000 doses in each of the first two weeks of March.

To date, Canada has received about 928,000 doses from Pfizer and 515,000 from Moderna.

Pfizer will need to ship 450,000 doses a week on average in the last two weeks of March to meet its contract for four million doses by March 31. Moderna will need to ship about 1.3 million doses in March to meet its contract to ship two million doses by the same date.

Newfoundland election delayed for nearly half the province due to COVID-19

The chief electoral officer of Newfoundland and Labrador has postponed voting on Saturday for 18 of 40 districts as the province deals with a rapidly worsening outbreak in metro St. John's. The 18 districts encompass about half the province's population.

The election cannot go ahead in the districts — all on the Avalon Peninsula — as COVID-19 cases have caused "considerable operational impacts," said Bruce Chaulk in a release Thursday afternoon. "Many election workers have resigned out of fear of interacting with the public on election day. We cannot hold traditional polls without the support of these people," Chaulk said.

Special ballot deadlines are being extended to allow more people to vote by mail, regardless of their district. People can now apply to vote by special ballot until Saturday at 8 p.m. NT, the same time in-person voting wraps up at unaffected polls. People can apply through an Elections NL online form or by downloading an application and submitting it by either email or fax. They must also be able to show the necessary identification and proof of address. If approved, voters must then complete their ballot and have it mailed back by Feb. 25.

Vancouver School Board extends Option 4 online learning until end of academic year

The Vancouver School Board is extending a remote learning option that some parents with health concerns say protects kids' education and their families' safety during the pandemic. ["Option 4," also called the "Learn from Home Transition Option,"](#) allows elementary school pupils to learn remotely while holding their places in their physical schools and programs with an eye to them eventually returning to in-class learning. Online education normally means they would lose those places. It was rolled out in September as a temporary measure and was most recently set to wrap up March 1.

Alberta changing rules to require negative COVID-19 tests at border crossings

Starting Monday, Alberta will require all travellers arriving at land border crossings to show proof of a negative PCR test completed in the United States within the previous 72 hours, the province's top public health doctor says.

In coming weeks, all air travellers arriving from outside of Canada will also be required to undergo a COVID-19 test on entry at the border and to quarantine for 14 days at a federally-designated hotel.

Alberta announces further expansion of COVID-19 rapid testing

Alberta plans to provide rapid testing kits for COVID-19 so long-term care and supportive living facilities can perform routine screening on all staff even if they do not have symptoms.

Early detection of cases will protect people who live in the facilities, Dr. Mark Joffe, a vice-president and medical director at Alberta Health Services, said at a news conference Tuesday.

Staff will be given a rapid test once a week. If cases in the surrounding community have a positivity rate of five per cent or higher, testing will be administered twice a week. Anyone with a positive result will go into isolation immediately and receive the standard polymerase chain-reaction (PCR) test for confirmation.

Canadian Chamber of Commerce – Cannabis Act Review: Ancillary Businesses

On the second anniversary of legalization of recreational cannabis for adult use, the Canadian Chamber's National Cannabis Working Group is launching an industry-led review of the Cannabis Act to provide recommendations on how the government should improve Canada's federal legislative and regulatory frameworks for cannabis.

Date and Time: February 17, 2021 | 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. ET | Online

[Register Here](#)