



Renfrew County and District Health Unit  
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

## For Immediate Release

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(Pembroke, Ontario, 9:00 a.m., December 11, 2020)

### **RCDHU Releases COVID-19 Travel Advisory and Safe Holiday Guidance**

This holiday season we all must work together to protect one another by making safe choices. This means that when planning, it is important to assess the level of risk associated with any activity, and to adhere to all measures set out in [Ontario's COVID-19 Response Framework](#).

"We all know too well that this virus travels, and travels quickly. Last March cases popped up around the world in weeks. Almost all cases in Renfrew County and District can be traced to travel, folks who came into the region or those who travelled out and returned. For example, our two largest outbreaks with 70 or more cases can be attributed to travelers to and from the Southern Ontario and Toronto areas, and then there is our close proximity to Ottawa," states Dr. Cushman, Acting Medical Officer of Health, Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU).

"Based on this information, I am issuing a Travel Advisory for residents of Renfrew County and District between now and the early new year. There are a number of communities in the red level issued under the Ontario COVID-19 Framework, that folks frequently travel to including the Toronto and Montreal areas. Red zones in areas of Western Quebec are also problematic and while Ottawa has improved dramatically over the past week, that situation can change quickly with the shopping, celebration and travel risks the Christmas season brings," continues Dr. Cushman.

To summarize, this year the holidays need to be spent at home with members of your household, and travel, which in fact would undermine this recommendation, needs to be suspended.

"This is going to be a long and tough winter, but the good news is that Health Canada has approved the first vaccine and the roll out will start soon. There is light at the end of the tunnel but in the meantime, we need everybody to do their part," finishes Dr. Cushman.

With the holidays looking a little different this year, RCDHU wants to make planning your holiday season safe and easier. For more information on how to navigate the holidays in a COVID-safe way, visit [RCDHU's website](#) for [holiday safety guidance](#), [holiday gathering recommendations](#), [safer versus riskier holiday activities](#), and [at-home holiday activity ideas](#), or call 613-732-3629 or 1-800-267-1097.

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