



## MEDIA RELEASE

May 11, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### MUNICIPAL BOAT LAUNCHES TO OPEN MAY 15<sup>TH</sup>

Petawawa, ON – Town staff are preparing the Petawawa Point and Black Bay boat launches to open for public use on May 15<sup>th</sup>. At present, the water levels on the Ottawa River remain high, thus preventing the installation of the docks at Petawawa Point, however, staff will continue to monitor water levels and install the docks as soon as it is safe to do so. The municipality does not typically provide notice of boat launch and dock installations, however, while under a pandemic, it is an opportunity to share with users the additional safety guidelines from the various organizations which govern water resources and activities.

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry permits fishing, with adherence to the regulations. Those regulations can be found here: [www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-fishing-regulations-summary](http://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-fishing-regulations-summary). Transport Canada, a federal jurisdiction, governs regulations on watercraft. They strongly recommend that you stay home, but if you do go out in your pleasure craft they provide regulations that must be adhered to. Those regulations can be found here: <http://www.tc.gc.ca/en/initiatives/covid-19-measures-updates-guidance-tc/covid-19-guidance-posters-marine.html>.

At present, based on the extension of provincial orders until May 19<sup>th</sup>, our municipal parks and beaches remain closed to the public. As such, if you intend to use the boat launch please adhere not only to the posted boat launch rules but to the additional measures put in place to manage access to these resources during this time. Above all, ensure you follow the guidelines set out to avoid the contraction of COVID-19. Those include but are not limited to: wash your hands often, coughing into your elbow, refrain from touching your face, ensuring physical distancing of two (2) m, no gatherings with more than five people, less in constrained areas such as a pleasure craft. Be mindful and respectful of others using the launch services.

The OPP are reminding water users that they should inform family members of their water travel plans and anticipated time of return. They further recommend that all required boating PPE be worn, at all times, particularly now when the water is cold and risk of hypothermia due to exposure is high.

For many, access to nature and the pursuit of fishing or canoeing a lazy river is a necessary activity to support good mental and physical health. The Town of Petawawa is opening the boat launches to provide a healthy safe environment to support those who need this infrastructure to ensure their wellbeing.

More information about the Town's response to COVID-19 is available at [www.petawawa.ca](http://www.petawawa.ca).

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