

## Joleen Kaminski

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**From:** CLRInfo  
**Sent:** September 3, 2021 9:12 AM  
**To:** Maria Sushkova  
**Subject:** COVID-19, Wildfire Situation Update - Sept 3

**Importance:** High

### [CLR Members](#),

Please find the latest updates on the current situation in the province.

### [Provincial state of emergency extended](#)

The Government of British Columbia has extended the provincial state of emergency through the end of the day on Sept. 14, 2021, to support the ongoing co-ordinated response to the wildfire situation and to ensure public safety.

As of 7 p.m. (Pacific time) on Wednesday, Sept. 1, 216 wildfires were burning in B.C., with 17 evacuation orders affecting approximately 2,566 properties. There were 49 evacuation alerts affecting approximately 3,900 properties.

Current fire conditions may lead to continued severe fire behaviour and the potential for more evacuations. While extraordinary powers under the Emergency Program Act are not needed at this time, the declaration gives the Province the ability to move quickly, if the need arises.

#### **Quick Facts:**

- The provincial state of emergency supporting B.C.'s wildfire response remains in effect until Sept. 15, 2021, at 12:01 a.m. (Pacific time).
- The provincial government can extend the period of a declaration made by the minister responsible as necessary.

#### **Learn More:**

For information on evacuation orders and alerts, visit Emergency Info BC: <https://www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca/>

Keep up to date on the provincial wildfire situation: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status>

### [New health measures introduced for Northern Health region](#)

Northern Health (NH) is introducing new public health orders covering the entire Northern Health region to manage COVID-19 activity.

#### **Effective at 12:01 AM Tuesday September 7, 2021:**

New NH orders:

- Personal gatherings in your home – one additional family or 5 guests
- Personal gatherings outside your home – maximum 50 people
- Indoor events – have a safety plan (the organizer should have a safety plan, but is not required to submit one for approval)
- Outside events – when more than 200 people, then have a safety plan
- Sporting events with spectators, indoor & outdoor – have a safety plan

Currently in Step 3 of BC restart plan and still in place:

In the Restart step 3 and current PHO order on gatherings and events:

- Indoor events - maximum of 50 people or 50% capacity, whichever is greater

- Outside events – maximum of 5000 people or 50% capacity, whichever is greater
- Outdoor spectator events: 5000 people or 50% capacity
- Indoor spectator event: 50 people or 50% capacity

Not restricted by either NH order or restart step 3/PHO order:

- All indoor fitness classes allowed, normal capacity
- Gyms and recreation facilities, normal capacity
- Restaurants, bars, pubs and nightclubs (except for socialization between tables or dancing)
- Worship services or educational activities (K to 12 and post-secondary)

These measures will remain in place until Northern Health experiences lower cases and higher vaccination rates.

**To learn more, visit:** Northern Health (<https://www.northernhealth.ca/>).

### **B.C. COVID-19 pandemic update**

As of Thursday, Sep. 2, 84.6% (3,922,233) of eligible people 12 and older in B.C. have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine and 76.9% (3,565,148) received their second dose.

In addition, 85.3% (3,688,115) of all eligible adults in B.C. have received their first dose and 77.9% (3,369,631) received their second dose.

B.C. is reporting 801 new cases of COVID-19, for a total of 167,654 cases in the province.

There are 5,931 active cases of COVID-19 in the province and 159,560 people who tested positive have recovered. Of the active cases, 199 individuals are in hospital and 116 are in intensive care. The remaining people are recovering at home in self-isolation.

From Aug. 25-31, people not fully vaccinated accounted for 79.0% of cases and from Aug 18-31, they accounted for 84.0% of hospitalizations.

Since December 2020, the Province has administered 7,494,567 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines.

#### **Learn More:**

For the Aug. 31, 2021, modelling presentation, visit: [http://news.gov.bc.ca/files/8-31\\_PHO\\_modelling.pdf](http://news.gov.bc.ca/files/8-31_PHO_modelling.pdf)

For the provincial health officer's order on masks in public indoor settings, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/25217>

For the Aug. 23, 2021, announcement on proof of vaccination in B.C., visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/25211>

For the Aug. 12, 2021, announcement on mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for long-term care workers, visit: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/25143>

For new health measures in the central Okanagan, visit:

[https://www.interiorhealth.ca/AboutUs/MediaCentre/NewsReleases/Documents/IB\\_COVID\\_Outbreak\\_6%20August.pdf](https://www.interiorhealth.ca/AboutUs/MediaCentre/NewsReleases/Documents/IB_COVID_Outbreak_6%20August.pdf)

For information on breakthrough cases, visit: [http://news.gov.bc.ca/files/7-27\\_breakthrough\\_cases.pdf](http://news.gov.bc.ca/files/7-27_breakthrough_cases.pdf)

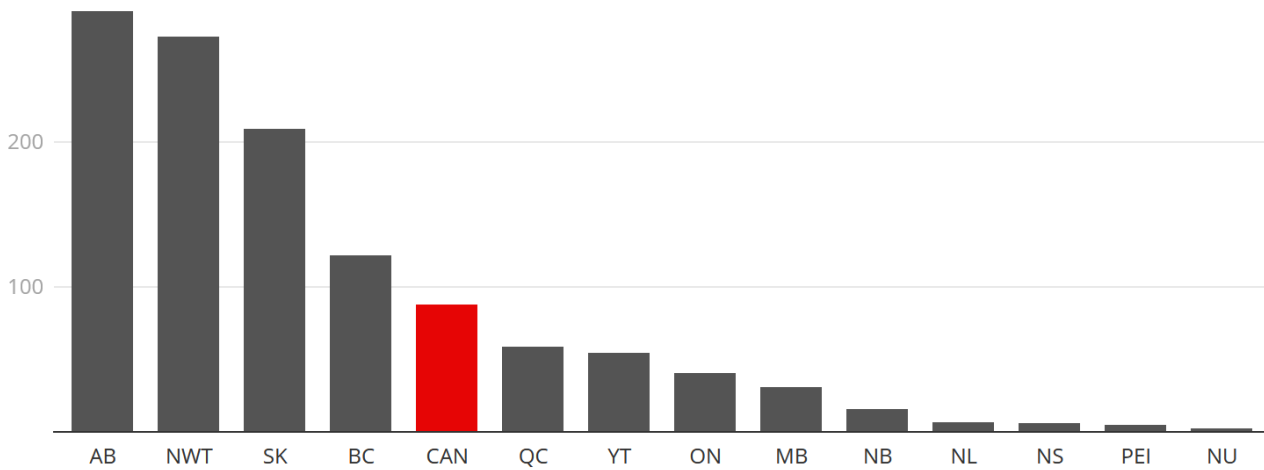
Or see the BC Centre for Disease Control's (BCCDC) weekly data summary: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data#summary>

Detailed data is posted daily on the BCCDC dashboard: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/data> or: [www.bccdc.ca](http://www.bccdc.ca)

To register to be immunized or to learn about getting your second dose, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/register>

Or: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/dose-2>

To learn about BC's Restart plan, visit:



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Chart: Robson Fletcher / CBC • Source: Provincial health authorities & Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0009-01

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restart>

For recent modelling, visit: [http://news.gov.bc.ca/files/6-28\\_PHO\\_presentation.pdf](http://news.gov.bc.ca/files/6-28_PHO_presentation.pdf)

For the provincial health officer's orders and guidance, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/current-health-topics/covid-19-novel-coronavirus>

For guidance on restrictions, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/restrictions>

The latest updates, including case counts, prevention, risks and to find a testing centre near you: <http://www.bccdc.ca/> or follow @CDCofBC on Twitter.

### [Western provinces driving Canada's 4th COVID-19 wave](#)

Canada's western provinces are largely driving the country's fourth wave of COVID-19 cases. In British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan, infection rates are above the country's average and far beyond every province to the east, including Ontario.

The rate of cases in the last seven days in B.C. was 93 per 100,000 people as of Aug. 30, federal data shows, with Alberta's rate at 159 and Saskatchewan's at 135, with no province to the east going more than 43.

In terms of raw case growth, Alberta currently has the most new infections in the country, with more than 7,000 cases reported in one week.

Meanwhile, in B.C., where there are more active cases reported than in either Ontario or Quebec, officials are taking major steps toward tighter restrictions, including bringing back a mask mandate in public places and at events, and implementing a strict vaccine passport program that will prove the holder's immunization status.

"Neither of those things are going to be immediately effective," said Dr. Srinivas Murthy, an infectious diseases specialist and clinical associate professor in pediatrics at the University of British Columbia. "I think we have some challenges with the timing of our interventions, like letting loose of the mask mandates earlier in the summer, then reinstating them."

It is feared now that any measures taken at this point, as cases are surging across Western Canada, won't prevent many of the serious infections expected in the weeks ahead.

B.C. officials acknowledged during a Tuesday modelling presentation that the more likely scenario is a plateauing of cases and hospitalizations in the province, or even a slight increase, rather than a dramatic drop in reported infections.

B.C.'s provincial health officer, Dr. Bonnie Henry, and Health Minister Adrian Dix also said that in order to bring down case counts and hospitalizations before October, the vaccination rate will need to increase by an average of 7% across all age groups.

### **New fund launched for community events**

The Province began accepting applications on Friday, Aug. 27, to support B.C.-based events through the new **Fairs, Festivals and Events Recovery Fund**.

The Government of B.C. is providing up to \$12.9 million in one-time grants to eligible event organizers to support their efforts to resume safely. Grant amounts for each event will be up to 20% of the total event budget, to a maximum of \$250,000 per application.

Eligible events include sport, arts and culture events, community celebrations, agricultural fairs, rodeos and exhibitions. Applications submitted by organizations will be required to demonstrate local or regional support and show the economic and social benefits for the community.

Applications are being accepted until Oct. 1, 2021, for eligible events that take place between July 1, 2021 to Sept. 30, 2022. Organizations are encouraged to submit their applications as soon as possible. Eligible expenses include operational costs, health and safety measures, venue rental, marketing, wages and promotion.

#### **Learn More:**

To see the Fairs, Festivals and Events Recovery Fund criteria and application, visit: [gov.bc.ca/fairs-festivals-events-recovery](http://gov.bc.ca/fairs-festivals-events-recovery)

### **COCA: Proof of vaccination mandate to shift B.C. culture**

As communicated earlier, starting Sept. 13, proof of vaccination requirements mandated by B.C. health officials will go into effect.

According to the province, people will be required to show proof of vaccination to attend some social events, businesses and recreational activities. By Oct. 24, entry to these settings will require people to be fully vaccinated at least seven days after receiving both doses.

The province noted individual businesses or event organizers may also implement these requirements earlier as part of their ongoing safety plans. Businesses or institutions choosing to adopt their own vaccination policies beyond those set out in this order will be responsible for doing their own due diligence.

While construction sites were not specifically mentioned by the provincial order, Council of Construction Associations (COCA) president Dave Baspaly said the requirements represent a major shift.

Baspaly explained WorkSafeBC wants employers to ensure they have safe work environments and has been reminding workers that the right to refuse unsafe work includes areas of high infection risk. This includes clusters of workers in confined spaces.

“That creates an ability for employers to say they need to know and workers to say they don’t want to work with those who aren’t vaccinated,” said Baspaly. “The passport the province has issued will start to change the culture, we believe.”

Baspaly said he expects some of the larger prime contractors to begin stricter measures as they have large workforces and large sites that increase the probability of an infection. This could mean requiring subtrades to prove vaccination onsite or simply moving workers who won’t disclose vaccination status to lower risk areas. [Read the full article.](#)

## [Safe Screen B.C.: Onsite rapid workplace screening programs for employees](#)

**About the Program:** Organized in partnership with the Ministry of Health and the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), Safe Screen B.C. will guide businesses through the application process for provincially available test-kits and support businesses in the set-up of onsite rapid workplace screening programs for employees ([B.C.'s Rapid COVID-19 Point of Care Screening Program](#)).

**Benefits of rapid antigen tests:** Rapid antigen screening provides another layer of protection for employers and employees to help keep workplaces safe, reduce the chances of outbreaks and control the spread of COVID-19. Rapid antigen tests can quickly screen asymptomatic employees for COVID-19 in close contact settings.

Tests are mobile and can be deployed close to employees who need testing, provide quick results to enable a public health response (typical turn around is 15-20 minutes). Provincially available tests are free for program participants.

### **Safe Screen B.C. participants will have access to:**

- Safe Screen B.C. toolkit – tools and resources for businesses to set up and execute rapid screening in the workplace, including template operating procedures, site plans, quick reference sheets and checklists.
- Support and guidance – tailored support to apply for test kits and set up an onsite employee rapid screening program.
- Streamlined reporting software – a reporting solution for managing Ministry of Health and Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) reporting requirements.
- Employee FAQ library – a library of employee FAQ templates for common rapid screening questions.
- Readiness training – facilitated virtual training sessions on how to fulfill application criteria and execute rapid screening.

**Program eligibility:** Safe Screen B.C. supports businesses interested in offering voluntary screening for employees without symptoms in close contact settings. Participating businesses will be asked to contribute a fee to cover the cost of the services provided by the Safe Screen B.C. program. Test kits are provided free of charge by the province via Health Canada Rapid Screening Program for employers “COVID-19 rapid testing and screening in workplaces”: [What employers should know – Canada.ca](#).

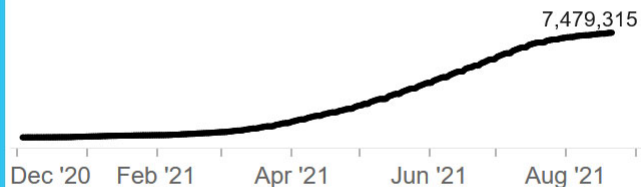
**How to sign-up for the program:** Businesses interested in Safe Screen B.C. can receive more information by emailing [info@safescreenbc.ca](mailto:info@safescreenbc.ca).

## [Immunization dashboard](#)

## Vaccination in BC is levelling off

**1.5%** change

As of Sep 01 2021  
Relative to Aug 25 2021



**7,479,315** | Doses administered | Sep 01 2021  
▲ 0.2% from previous day

Stay safe.

Ken McCormack | President & CEO

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