

# Edmonton Global- Covid-19 Update

**Monday, April 20, 2020**

Edmonton Global maintains a [Covid-19 Business Resources page](https://edmontonglobal.ca/covid-19-resources/) containing updated information for the Edmonton metro region's business community. [https://edmontonglobal.ca/covid-19-resources/.](https://edmontonglobal.ca/covid-19-resources/)

The contents of this update are not intended to replace the official communications of the Government of Canada, the Province of Alberta, or any official communications of our municipal or other partners.

## Government

### Federal

- Canada has 35,056 confirmed cases and 1,587 deaths.
- On Friday, PM Trudeau [announced](#) a federal energy stimulus package, which included \$1.7 billion to clean up orphan wells in Alberta, Saskatchewan and B.C., as well as aid for rural businesses and people working in the arts and culture sectors.
  - The money for cleaning up orphan and inactive wells is expected to help maintain 5,200 jobs in Alberta, which will receive about \$1 billion of the funding.
  - Premier Kenney responded to the stimulus package in a [statement](#) posted on Friday, posted on the Government of Alberta website.
- PM Trudeau announced on Sunday that the case numbers have been “trending in the right direction.” (<https://www.ctvnews.ca/health/coronavirus/pm-trudeau-says-canada-will-be-very-very-careful-about-lifting-covid-19-restrictions-1.4902793>)
  - While he did not announce the elimination of any specific lockdown measures, the PM did begin to mention the possibility, noting that many decisions would need to be made at the provincial or territorial level as the situation varies widely across Canada.
- PM Trudeau [announced](#) new measures over the weekend for closer scrutiny of a range of proposed transactions until the economy recovers from the pandemic. The PM said the government will be watching to make sure foreign interests don't try to take advantage of the crisis by snatching up important Canadian firms, including those producing medical supplies and other important equipment.
  - The government will be scrutinizing any transactions where foreign entities may attempt to invest in Canadian businesses that deal with public health or the provision of critical goods and services. Government is also taking a closer look at all investments by companies or organizations with links to foreign governments while some other investments require the approval of Industry Minister Navdeep Bains.

## Provincial

- The Alberta COVID-19 reporting website has returned online and once again displays up-to-date data. <https://covid19stats.alberta.ca/>
- As of April 19, 2020, Alberta has 2,803 confirmed cases. 1,198 of these cases are confirmed to have recovered.
  - 55 Albertans in total have died from COVID-19; 141 have been hospitalized over the course of the pandemic and 39 have required treatment in intensive care.
  - More than 97,000 people have been tested for COVID-19 throughout the province.
  - The Calgary zone makes up 71% of Alberta's cases, while the Edmonton zone makes up 15% of Alberta's cases.
- On Friday, 358 cases were linked to the Cargill Meat Plant (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/cargill-alberta-covid-19-deena-hinshaw-1.5537377>), representing Alberta's largest single outbreak.

## Elsewhere in Canada

- In **Ontario**, newly released modelling figures suggest that despite an increased number of cases, the peak will likely be much smaller than feared. (<https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/ontario-releases-new-modelling-data-on-covid-19-says-cases-appear-to-have-peaked-1.4903328>) Earlier modelling suggested that the province could see as many as 300,000 infections—new projections put that figure at 20,000 infections.
- In **Quebec**, where cases and deaths respectively make up about half of Canada's total, the Canadian Armed Forces have deployed 125 medical officers to support long-term care facilities. (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/covid-19-april-18-1.5537249>)
- The remote town of La Loche, **Saskatchewan**, has become the site of an outbreak at a care home—demonstrating that these facilities are at major risk throughout the country, no matter how remote. (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/coronavirus-saskatchewan-april-17-1.5535900>)

## Economic

- Oil prices were at their lowest recorded level since March 1986. (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/oil-price-monday-1.5538048>)
  - Premier Jason Kenney noted that Western Canadian Select (WCS) oil briefly traded at negative prices, meaning that it was costing suppliers more to produce and store oil than the oil was worth. (<https://twitter.com/jkenney/status/1252092162126184449>)
- On March 24, 2020, **Alberta sold C\$300 million of 100-year bonds at 3% interest.** <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-03-24/alberta-turns-to-century-bonds-to-raise-money-in-market-rout>
- **The contraction in Canada's economy is the largest on records:** On April 15th, the agency released a flash estimate of gross domestic product in March, designed to inform early assessments of the impact that business shutdowns and restrictions on physical distancing are having on overall economic activity. The decline in real GDP in March was estimated at 9%, the largest monthly decrease observed for the current data series (which tracks movements back to

1961). March's flash estimate yields an approximate 2.6% decline in real GDP for the first quarter of 2020. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/71-607-x/71-607-x2020009-eng.htm>

- **Canada lost more than 1 million jobs in March:** The March Labour Force Survey (LFS) reported that employment declined by more than 1 million from February to March, and that a further 2.1 million Canadians remained employed but worked less than half their usual hours, including zero hours, during the week of March 15 to 21. During the week of March 22 to 28, 2.8 million workers were absent from their job for reasons related to COVID-19, including temporary lay-offs. Not only were millions of workers absent from their jobs, but many who continued to work shifted to working from home.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200417/dq200417a-eng.htm>

- **Oil prices remain in a historically low territory:** WCS continues to trade below CAD\$20 per barrel. As a perspective, the ten-year average has been C\$60 per barrel.



## Beef and pork producers are affected

- All major beef and pork processors, Cargill, JBS, Smithfield's Foods, and Tyson in Canada and the US, have been affected by coronavirus outbreak among production staff, and as a result, either halted or reduce processing capacity.
- There are reports that retail price for meat has increased from lack of supply; there is also a downward pressure price of live animals due to lowered processing capacity. More on the impact of the closures on the agriculture sector here <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/cattle-covid-19-1.5532625>

## Stakeholder / Community

- Applied Pharmaceutical Innovation is ramping up efforts to produce ventilator drugs in anticipation of possible shortages. API has switched gears (from moving viable drug ideas into clinical trial phase) to produce drugs that it believes will soon be in short supply. Watch the Global News coverage [here](#).