



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

Three RDCK ice rinks scheduled to reopen Monday, September 14 Indoor pools targeting early October opening

Nelson, BC: The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) is targeting to reopen three ice rinks at RDCK facilities in Castlegar (Castlegar & District Community Complex), Creston (Creston & District Community Complex) and Nelson (Nelson & District Community Complex) on Monday September 14. Ice rinks have been closed since March 16 due to COVID-19. Staff will consult with user groups about planning the reopening of Pioneer and Civic Centre arenas in Castlegar and Nelson, as well as the curling rink in Creston in the near future.

Under the guidance of the Provincial Health Officer (PHO), RDCK Community Services has been focused on working with provincial organizations and local government recreation services to safely reopen and offer a limited variety of programming. RDCK staff have created ice rink specific safety and occupancy plans for each of its facilities, which will assist users in aligning their safety plans for ice usage. Initially the reopening process will be slow and deliberate for primary community partners. This includes the Kootenay International Junior Hockey League (KIJHL), minor hockey associations, Skate Canada clubs, Speed Skating Canada and adult recreational leagues. Expanded programming and private rentals will potentially be offered in the future depending on the ability of all users of the facilities to follow the necessary safety plans and the direction of the PHO.

Organizations have been asked to provide ice requests for the 2020-21 season and submit a COVID-19 safety plan. This plan will work in conjunction with return to sport guidelines set forth by each respective sport and the RDCK arena safety plans to determine how users will use the facilities. The RDCK will review all safety plans to ensure compliance with the RDCK COVID-19 safety plan before the ice can be booked. Meetings with regular ice user groups across the region have been on-going to ensure a clear understanding of the process.

“The 2020-21 ice season will not be business as usual,” said Craig Stanley, Manager of the Creston and District Community Complex and Chair of the RDCK Arena Re-opening Committee. “It is an ever-evolving situation and changes can happen quickly. We will be in constant communication with our user groups to ensure everyone is updated with the most current information and health practices. “

Joe Chirico, General Manager of Community Services adds: “The RDCK must change the way recreation services are provided to limit the transmission of COVID-19. Physical distancing of two metres between participants and keeping the event under 50 people continue to impact our recreation and parks operations. The RDCK and all our recreation partners will abide by all Provincial Health Orders and recommendations as the safety of our staff and the public will always be paramount.”

The RDCK’s Aquatic Task Force is working closely with the Life Saving Society and the Red Cross Society on a COVID-19 safety plan for all indoor pools to ensure the safety of our staff, participants and the community. The goal is to target early October for starting limited aquatic programming and rentals with our community partners.

Recreation and park services are reviewed regularly as new information and protocols become available. The RDCK appreciates the patience of all our users as we implement new expanded services with COVID-19 policies and procedures in place.

For up to date information regarding openings and closures of specific areas of recreation, please visit www.rdck.ca/recreation.

Incorporated in 1965, the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) is a local government that serves 60,000 residents in 11 electoral areas and nine member municipalities. The RDCK provides more than 160 services, including community facilities, fire protection and emergency services, grants, planning and land use, regional parks, resource recovery and handling, transit, water services and much more. For more information about the RDCK, visit www.rdck.ca.

-30-

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