



# Nibinamik First Nation

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## DECLARATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY – UPDATE #1

A State of Emergency is hereby declared in Nibinamik First Nation, Summer Beaver, ON by Chief Sheldon Oskineegish and the Council.

Effective 5:00pm on May 13, 2020, The State of Emergency has been declared due to the ongoing and inevitable impacts of the COVID-19 Global Pandemic on Nibinamik First Nation and to the failing Diesel Generating system that is further impeding an effective response.

Essential and necessary medical resources such as health care professionals (doctors and nurses), medical supplies, testing kits and personal protective equipment are inadequate to mount an appropriate response to the COVID-19 Global Pandemic.

The ability to mount a response is further impacted by the overcrowded housing, lack of isolation and assessment space, serious threats to food security and lack of reliable communication infrastructure.

Frequent power outages being experienced on a daily basis have wide spread impacts, creating serious and unmanageable levels of risk for community members.

Individuals with existing life threatening medical conditions, requiring treatment at home, such as dialysis, face unacceptable risk and potential consequences without power.

Water and sanitization systems rely on power to operate, without power these systems fail, exposing homes in the community to potential sewage back ups and no water hygiene and cleaning.

Frequent power outages in the temporary infirmary will prevent medical personnel from providing necessary care to patients as any diagnostic or monitoring equipment will become unreliable along with loss of heat, lighting, water and sanitization services.

Food security concerns grow exponentially as the perishable food reserves are at risk of spoilage every time the power goes off.

The communication systems in Nibinamik First Nation are inadequate to meet the growing complexity of communication needs resulting from the COVID-19 Global Pandemic. The internet service is through satellite, experiencing frequent outages, it is too slow to be a reliable means to receive global, provincial and federal information, advisories and updates pertinent to the pandemic response as well as to communicate with community members who are under social distancing directives. To compound this,

the service provider has indicated that they are not accepting new customers, leaving some community members completely without service. Cellular service is spotty, with multiple “dead” spots, making dropped calls a normal occurrence. The frequent power outages tax the back up generators, leaving the community at high risk for cell phone outages every time the power goes out.

As Chief and Council of Nibinamik First Nation, we are committed to the safety of all our members and are exercising our authority to take necessary steps to keep our community members safe and healthy.

This includes, but is not limited to:

1. We direct all available personnel and resources to the health, well-being and security of Nibinamik First Nation
2. All community members will practice increase hygiene, cleaning and social distancing measures as directed
3. Installation of replacement generators must begin immediately to stabilize power and mitigate elevated risk levels posed by frequent, ongoing power outages.

The Federal and Provincial Governments must come together to provide funding and emergency management supports in the coming weeks and months in order to position Nibinamik First Nation to respond to the COVID-19 Global Pandemic. The approval processes to access supports to upgrade the diesel generator station, stabilizing power supply, must be prioritized and streamlined.

The Chief and Council of Nibinamik First Nation would welcome an opportunity to meet with Regional Director General to proactively address mitigation of risk to community members.

This State of Emergency will remain in effect until the risks defined herein are resolved and it is rescinded by subsequent order.

