

COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) Yard and Garage Sales

Considerations for sale of second-hand items and/or yard and garage sales in step 3

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Key Points

- Follow all gathering limits in place for indoor and outdoor public events and social gatherings.
 - Position tables and items far apart to allow for physical distancing and consider taping direction arrows for traffic flow.
 - Wear a non-medical face covering if physical distancing is difficult.
 - Have hand sanitizer available for both yourself and customers to use.
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The COVID-19 pandemic is evolving rapidly. This guidance is subject to change. Please visit the Southwestern Public Health website (<https://www.swpublichealth.ca/>) regularly for updates and announcements. This guidance is to support owners/operators on how to keep yard/garage sale settings operating safely and includes mandated restrictions and capacity limits in place in Step 3 of Ontario's **Roadmap to Reopen**.

New Gathering Limits

Gatherings such as yard sales can result in the spread of COVID-19 if they are not planned and managed carefully. The Ontario government has implemented new gathering limits in Ontario's Roadmap to Reopen. The new limits are as follows:

- During reopening step three: a maximum of 100 people are permitted at an outdoor event or gathering; Maximum 25 people at an indoor gathering with other restrictions

The lowered limitations apply to all public events and social gatherings such as functions, parties, dinners, gatherings, BBQs and wedding receptions. As was the case with the previous limits, indoor and outdoor gatherings cannot be combined.

Individuals are required to continue to maintain physical distancing of at least two metres with people from outside their households.

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During this time, some municipalities may prohibit yard/garage sales, and by-law officers, or local police may enforce these bans. Check with your local municipality for current information on this before organizing a yard/garage sale.

At this time, large scale, collective street/community sales are not recommended. However, if individuals choose to participate in second-hand item exchanges, individual yard/garage sales, here are some key considerations:

Key considerations for hosting a yard sale

Seller/Host:

- Have a plan to reinforce limiting the number of people to adhere to gathering limits. This may include designating a person to monitor the numbers or posting signage at the end of your property regarding the maximum number of individuals permitted at one time. Ask people to wait if there is already the maximum number of people present
- Position tables as far apart as possible to allow for physical distancing of 2m (6 feet)
- Identify a specific traffic flow so that customers are moving in one direction by posting signs or taping arrows on the pavement
- Have hand sanitizer available for yourself and customers' use
- Do not allow buyers into your home. Keep items for sale in an open space outdoors or well-ventilated area (i.e. garage with windows/doors open)
- For cash exchange, ensure that you wash/sanitize your hands before and after touching the money or another persons' hands
- Consider designating a cash box space for customers to set their money down and retrieve change rather than directly exchanging money
- If possible, use contactless payments such as e-transfers
- If physical distancing cannot be maintained, it is recommended that a non-medical mask/face covering be worn even outdoors
- Limit the handling of items as much as possible once your sale has begun – sanitizing hands before and after adjusting items. Encourage customers to view items for sale without touching or handling them
- Food or drink should not be sold at yard/garage sales

Customers:

- Do not go out if you have any of the following **symptoms**
- Clean your hands often (think before, during, after) you arrive and leave the garage sale
- Stay 2m (6 feet) from others while shopping

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- Have only one member of your household do the shopping
- Look for the direction to follow the specific flow of traffic the seller has laid out for the sale
- Wear a non-medical mask/face covering, especially if you cannot maintain 6 feet of distance from others. If you are unable to wear a mask and physical distancing will be challenging to maintain, consider sending a friend/relative to shop for you
- Avoid touching your face, nose, eyes, or mouth
- Limit the handling of items as much as possible – sanitizing hands before and after, post signage to remind people of this
- Wipe down the inside of your vehicle where the item was stored or take a bag to put the items you purchase in so you can discard or clean upon return home
- For cash exchange ensure that you wash/sanitize your hands before and after touching the money

For further information regarding reducing the risk of COVID-19 virus transmission through contaminated surfaces please see [Southwestern Public Health's guidance document on Contaminated Surfaces](#).

Be kind. Be Patient. These are extraordinary times that we are all going through together. For more information on COVID-19 and how to stay healthy, visit: www.swpublichealth.ca or call the Southwestern Public Health 'COVID-19 Response Centre' for assistance at: 1-800-922-0096 x 9