



NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE SERVICE

Chief of Police Bryan MacCulloch M.O.M., BA, MA

An open letter to the people of Niagara;

Over the last 10 months, COVID-19 has found a way to infiltrate and weave its way into the very fabric of our daily lives.

Our homes, our workplaces and our relationships have all been touched and altered by the reality of this deadly virus.

On December 18, 2020, Niagara surpassed 100 deaths and just 25 days later on January 12, 2021, we recorded our 200th death. Tragically, that is 200 members of our community, who have died at the hands of a virus that we, collectively, have the power to stop.

When I think about the loss of life in our community that we would experience in “normal times”, I think about issues like traffic fatalities or incidents of homicide. Over the last decade, in Niagara, we experience about 20 traffic related fatalities and about five deaths related to homicide each year. To put COVID-19 fatalities into that context, it means that the deaths we have seen in just 10 months across the Niagara Region are the equivalent of 10 years of traffic fatalities and more than 40 years of homicide related deaths.

Our citizens and our community leaders, rightfully so, would be shocked and outraged if we experienced this level of death as a result of criminal conduct in our community, and we need to take a similar approach to COVID-19 and the actions we collectively take to prevent further death.

Not for a moment am I equating the public’s actions during the pandemic to criminal conduct. However, not unlike the cause of death in many fatal traffic collisions, the deaths we are experiencing from the pandemic are often tied to human error; to the decisions we make, and our inattentiveness to ensuring safety remains a priority.

Leadership is about having the courage to take a stand, to do the right thing and to be an example to others.

Staying home during the Provincial lockdown is not just the right thing to do because if you don’t you will be punished, but because morally and ethically, it is the right thing to do.

To the citizens who call Niagara home; I am calling on each and every single one of you to be a leader.

Stay home - lives depend on it.

Sincerely;

