



Town of Hilton Head Island TOWN MANAGER UPDATE

An Update from Assistant Town Manager Josh Gruber 6/12/2020

Good afternoon Hilton Head Islanders and Guests,

With cases of the coronavirus peaking across South Carolina, our Governor and state health organizations urge everyone to please continue taking precautions to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Each one of us must act responsibly so we don't endanger ourselves, our loved ones, coworkers and others.

Our Town Council passed a resolution last month and made a plea for people to wear face coverings. At a news conference this week, state epidemiologist Linda Bell, who has been one of the top health officials dealing with this pandemic in South Carolina, said she is more concerned now about the virus than she has ever been. Over the last two weeks, South Carolina has seen some of its highest daily cases of COVID-19 since the pandemic started. This is attributed to people not wearing masks and practicing physical distancing. Bell said those are two ways to curb our cases.

As we work to rebound our economy, our schools, our businesses and our lives, we have to follow public health guidelines. COVID-19 can spread quickly and easily - even by people who don't have any symptoms. Look out for your neighbor. Wear a mask so we can all work to stay Hilton Head Island strong and South Carolina strong.

At the Town, we have taken strong steps with our staff and we will be taking strong steps with the public when our office buildings reopen this coming Monday, June 15th.

- We encourage you to conduct business by phone or online, if you are able to.
- You will need to make an appointment with Town staff if you need in-person help.
- All visitors are required to wear a mask while in our buildings.
- You can get more details about the steps we have taken to ensure physical distancing and to promote wearing a face covering on our website at <https://hiltonheadislandsc.gov/government/news/newsdetails.cfm?NewsID=1612>

Keep Up With COVID-19 Precautions

For the latest update on COVID-19 cases in South Carolina and in Beaufort County, and mobile testing locations, visit [SCDHEC.gov](https://www.scdhec.gov).

Parking Study Underway

Every summer, our beach parking lots are heavily used, forcing us to reshuffle our resources, hire security guards to manage the flow of parking and offer overflow alternatives for parking. Many times, these issues spill over into affecting adjoining communities. To help address our parking issues, we have initiated a parking study with



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Walker Consultants, which has offices in Tampa, Charlotte, Atlanta and other locations across the country. The study will give us guidance on how we can attempt to comprehensively structure our parking infrastructure to manage the needs of our community. Study consultants have met with staff, have begun interviewing Town Council members and are meeting virtually with public stakeholders to get some baseline information. In the next few weeks, our consultants will launch a public forum survey and give all Island residents an opportunity to provide their thoughts and comments on parking issues. More to come on this survey soon.

Beach Parking Guidance for Islanders Beach Park

Islanders Beach Park is for beach pass holders only for the time being. There are only a limited number of spaces in the parking lot, and they are available on a first come, first served basis. Security will close the park when it becomes full and will not reopen it until after several spaces become available. Staff cannot do one car out one car in because this creates a safety issue on Folly Field Road. If you are told the lot is full, please return at a later time.

Beach Parking Guidance for Coligny Beach Park

Coligny Beach parking lot fills up fast. Security will close the park when it becomes full and will not reopen it until after several spaces become available. Staff cannot do one car out one car in because this creates a safety issue on Pope Avenue. If you are told the lot is full, please return at a later time or use the overflow parking lot at [Crossings Park, 4 Haig Point Circle](#). A Palmetto Breeze Shuttle is available to transport you from Crossings to Coligny Beach Park.

Beach Signs for Social Distancing and Other Regulations

Please practice social distancing to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus, even during your trip to the beach. When you visit one of our seven beach parks, you will be greeted with signs encouraging you to practice physical distancing and wear a face covering. This is for your protection. New signs also highlight our new rules regarding shovels, holes and items left on the beach overnight.

Here are the new rules now in effect:

- Only small plastic shovels are allowed.
- Holes dug on the beach should be less than a foot deep and must be filled in before you leave the beach.
- All personal property that you bring with you must be removed by sunset.



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Business License Renewal Deadline is June 20th

Our Business license renewal due date of June 20th is coming up soon. We expect a large volume of renewals over the next two weeks. If you have not renewed your business license, we encourage to do so by mail or on-line. You may also drop off your renewal forms and payments in the mailbox at the main entrance of Town Hall. Business license personnel are available by phone at 843-341-4677 during normal office hours for your questions.

Stay Up-to-Date With Town Government

Now is the time to connect with us via our e-subscription service. Please visit our website and subscribe today. This is so important especially now that Hurricane season is underway. Through this service, you will receive updates on Town projects, arts and culture news, emergency information and more. On the sign-up page, you will be able to choose topics you are most interested in. If you have already signed up for this service, we encourage you to go to your subscription page and update your selections. This is something you will need to do because as a self-service portal we do not have access to privacy information to update the service for you.

Did You Know You Can Get Free Credit Reports?

Consumers can now request one free credit report a week from Experian, TransUnion and Equifax until April 2021 because of the Coronavirus pandemic. The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) encourages consumers to take advantage of this new offer at [AnnualCreditReport.com](https://www.scdca.com/AnnualCreditReport.com). One reason you may want to check your credit report often is to find and report and suspicious activity. Scammers are out in full force, taking advantage of the pandemic to steal consumers' information and money. Keep an eye on your credit report to spot suspicious activity before it's too late! To learn about different coronavirus scams, read SCDCA's ["How to Spot a Scammer."](#)

For an entire credit report guide, check out SCDCA's new ["Credit Reports: What They are and Why They Matter."](#) Consumers who believe they are the victim of a scam or identity theft are encouraged to seek guidance from SCDCA's Identity Theft Unit. Call (844) TELL DCA (835-5322) or fill out a Scam Report form by visiting our website and clicking on the How Do I... button, then Report a Scam.

Coming July 1: Changes at the Pump – Motor Fuel User Fee Increases \$0.02

For the fourth consecutive year, South Carolina's Motor Fuel User Fee, which helps support road, bridge, and infrastructure construction in South Carolina, will increase from \$0.22 to \$0.24 per gallon beginning July 1. The increase is part of the South Carolina Infrastructure and Economic Development Reform Act ("Act") passed by the General Assembly in 2017, which raises the fee by \$0.02 each July until 2022. For more details on the Motor Fuel User Fee and Income Tax Credit, visit dor.sc.gov.



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Ways to Give

For a list of very worthy organizations and initiatives that need your support as they continue to help individuals in our community, visit the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber Commerce at <https://www.hiltonheadchamber.org/covid-19/> These organizations are assisting with rent, food and other needs.