

Today's News - Friday, October 27, 2017

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Ontario continues to prepare for the federal government's plan to legalize cannabis by July 2018 by working with municipalities to identify possible store locations. In September, the province announced a safe and sensible framework to govern the lawful use and retail distribution of cannabis as a carefully controlled substance. This framework includes the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) overseeing retail sales through new stand-alone stores and online ordering. Today, letters were sent to all municipalities in Ontario to share the next steps for establishing retail stores. The process will be led by the LCBO, working closely with the government and local communities. In accordance with the province's safe and sensible approach, two primary considerations will be used to guide the identification of municipalities where stores will be located:

- To achieve geographic distribution of stores across the province
- To reduce the number of illegal stores, including dispensaries, currently in operation

The LCBO will utilize guidelines to identify specific store locations with the objective of ensuring that youth are protected and the illegal market is addressed. This includes ensuring stores are not located in close proximity to schools. Once a prospective store site has been identified by the LCBO, a [notice will be posted online](#) and at the location to let the public know that a space has been selected for a proposed storefront. Before any decisions are made, there will be an opportunity for the public to ask questions and provide feedback on the proposed location. Under the proposed approach, approximately 150 standalone stores will be opened by 2020, including 40 stores by July 2018 and rising to 80 by July 2019. Online distribution will also be available to service all regions of the province. The government will evaluate how this approach is working throughout the rollout to ensure that the goals of safe, responsible sales of cannabis and elimination of the illegal market are achieved.

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Also Today:

- Ontario is reminding drivers and pedestrians to stay safe and be aware while ghouls, goblins and ghosts celebrate this Halloween. To help protect excited trick-or-treaters who are on the streets after dark, drivers are reminded to:
 - o Slow down and stay alert, especially near stopped vehicles who may be dropping off children
 - o Always yield to crossing pedestrians, be aware of your surroundings and watch out for children darting onto the street
 - o Avoid any distractions – keep your eyes on the road and hands on the wheel
 - o Always communicate clearly with pedestrians and other drivers on the road, and use your

turn signals

- o Always drive sober.

Parents and trick-or-treaters are encouraged to review safety precautions before heading out, including pedestrian and traffic safety rules, and reminded to:

- o Be seen — there are many ways to make it easier for drivers to see you, like wearing costumes with bright fabrics or reflective material and carrying a flashlight
- o Be alert and cautious of surroundings, especially on roadways
- o Look both ways when crossing the street and make eye contact with drivers
- o Always walk — do not run from house to house
- o Walk on the sidewalks whenever possible and always cross at pedestrian crossovers, crosswalks or marked intersections
- o If a sidewalk is unavailable, walk on the left side of the street facing traffic
- o Ensure children under the age of 12 have proper supervision
- o Trick-or-treat in familiar areas that are well lit.

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Our government's plan to build a stronger, healthier Ontario includes **historic new investments in health care**, including free **medications for everyone 24 and under through OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare**, providing free **tuition to over 210,000 students** and on-the-job learning opportunities to help land a great job, helping 100,000 kids access quality, licensed child care and making it more affordable for families, making everyday life more affordable by **reducing electricity costs by 25 per cent** on average through our Fair Hydro Plan, and taking action to **make housing more affordable** for homebuyers and renters through our Fair Housing Plan.