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Garage Sales During COVID-19



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Under Ontario's Stage 3 reopening plan, garage sales can be organized. But the Health Unit strongly encourages organizers and attendees to take precautions during COVID-19.

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Garage/Yard Sales

If you have concerns about your health or potential exposure to the coronavirus, you may want to hold off organizing a garage/yard sale at this time. If you decide to go ahead with a sale, take COVID-19 precautions..

If You Organize a Garage/Yard Sale

- If you or anyone in your hold is feeling ill, DO NOT go ahead with organizing the sale.

- Be aware of the limits on large gatherings currently in place during COVID-19. The limit for outdoor gatherings is up to 100 people, while the limit on indoor gatherings is up to 50 people.
- Keep an eye on the number of people attending the sale, and consider staggering the number of people coming and going to allow for physical distancing, especially if the sales area is small.
- Consider holding a sale outside on your driveway or in your garage, never in your home. It is safer to hold sales in outdoor or well-ventilated areas
- Encourage attendees to practise physical distancing as much as possible. Remind them to stay 2 metres (6 feet) apart. Consider using signs, chalk or other markings to show buyers where to stand to keep a safe distance.
- Space out sales items and tables to allow for/accommodate physical distancing.
- Provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer for people. Encourage its use, especially after any exchange of money.
- Ask people not to attend the sale if they are feeling sick or have symptoms of COVID-19
- Wash your hands with soap and water (or hand sanitizer if soap/water is unavailable), especially after handling cash
- Clean frequently-touched surfaces such as tables and

counter-tops often with household cleaner or diluted bleach solution.

- Ask potential buyers not to touch items unless they are making a purchase.
- Reduce contact when exchanging money. Try to maintain 2 metres distance. If able, set up a contactless payment method, such as e-transfer.
- Be aware of other safety considerations. For instance, baby walkers, infant self-feeding devices and other items are banned products in Canada. There are also common second-hand items like car seats, cribs, helmets, playpens, strollers, children's jewellery and kids' sleepwear that must meet certain federal regulatory requirements before they can be bought or sold in Canada.

If You are Attending a Garage/Yard Sale

- Stay home if sick.
- If possible, shop for used items online and arrange for delivery or curbside pickup
- Avoid unnecessary handling of items, unless you are going to buy it
- Maintain physical distancing by staying 2 metres (6 feet) from others at all times

- Wash hands with soap and water after attending a sale (or use hand sanitizer if soap/water is not available)
- Consider wearing a non-medical (cloth) mask or face covering to sales, especially if physical distancing cannot be maintained
- Pay with exact change if possible to reduce exchanging money multiple times
- Clean and disinfect any items you purchase and wash hands after handling any goods. Avoid buying items that are difficult to clean.

Second-Hand Items

Here are some more tips if you plan to buy second-hand essential items online during COVID-19:

- If you, or someone in your home has any symptoms of COVID-19 **do not** buy or sell any items. Stay home and self isolate
- Stick to community-based online groups for buying and selling. Use groups or apps where it's easier to confirm that people are who they say they are (such as linked to a personal profile of a social media account). If in doubt, don't engage
- If a deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Watch out for scams.

- Buy and sell with people that live in your community. Avoid travel.
- Don't provide your home address or visit anyone you do not know. If you do know the person, arrange for a curbside pickup or drop off. Never enter another person's house or allow anyone to enter your home.
- If possible, use digital payment services rather than cash.
- Drop off or pick up goods during the day and in a public location.
- Avoid all close contact. Practise physical distancing and stay metres (6 feet) away from others at all times.
- After purchasing an item, thoroughly clean and disinfect it. Avoid buying items that are difficult to clean.
- Don't touch your face and wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after handling items or cash.

Additional Resources

- [Project Safe Trade](#) – Ontario Provincial Police
- [Tips for Buying Second-Hand Products](#) – Health Canada
- [Information for Shoppers of Second-Hand Products](#) – Health Canada

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