



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY

Frequently Asked Questions

RDCK Arena Closures

What RDCK arenas have been closed?

Pioneer Arena located in Castlegar closed on January 18, 2021. The Civic Centre Arena in Nelson is scheduled to close January 29, 2021. Both facilities will return to operations in the fall of 2021.

When will the other RDCK arenas close?

The Nelson and District Community Complex, Castlegar and District Community Complex, and Creston and District Community Complex will remain open to spring break (March 14) or the end of March if there is sufficient demand.

Why is Pioneer Arena closing earlier than the Civic Centre Arena?

Pioneer Arena is staffed by Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) employees. The closure is earlier because of this fact.

The Civic Centre Arena has a contract for maintenance and janitorial operations at the arena. As a result, the RDCK has contract obligations. Anticipating the pandemic required more flexibility to control net costs; therefore, staff and the contractor negotiated a two week notice period to close the facility earlier than the regular operational year.

How has the Events and Gatherings Public Health Order impacted this decision?

The RDCK was waiting to make an informed decision on facility operations based upon an updated Public Health Order on January 8, 2021. Although the budget was negatively impacted in November and December, the RDCK felt that if the restrictions on adult team sports were lifted, particularly allowing games and tournaments to resume, the arenas could continue to operate until the end of February/early March. However, the RDCK also realized if the restrictions were not lifted Recreation Commission 5 (Nelson & District) and the Castlegar and District Community Complex & Recreation Commission would need to consider closing the secondary arenas to minimize the financial loss.

When the restrictions were not lifted, the budget and justification for opening the secondary arenas was lost. Since the opening of arenas on September 14, 2020, arena rental revenue across the RDCK is down \$118,000 over the same period in 2019. The Civic Centre Arena rental revenue is down \$30,597 and Pioneer Arena is down \$14,786. When this revenue is not generated from user fees the result is an increase in taxation used to cover operations. This taxation was not budgeted for and must be made up through cost reductions which requires the early closure of the facilities.

Both services do not generate enough revenue to cover the cost of operation. The only way to reduce the cost to the taxpayers is to shut the operations down. Keeping the secondary arenas open, even with the potential lifting of the restrictions in February would result in the arena side of the operation significantly being over budget and would require service cuts in other areas of the operations or impacting when the service could restart in the late summer/early fall.

How have the restrictions impacted employment costs?

RDCK Recreation Services cut \$2,566,994 of employment costs in 2020. Of this, \$1,248,884 was saved from staffing costs at the NDCC. These savings are from the livelihoods of community members who teach, instruct and supervise our programs and services. COVID-19 impacts everyone's health, especially those who lose their jobs and have less income. In 2021 salary costs have been reduced across all recreation budgets.