

Golf courses will not re-open during stay-at-home order

By Brian Lockhart

Don't expect to be swinging your clubs on the links any time soon.

The links at local golf courses are green, well manicured, and ready to be played, however, the ban on playing the sport is going to stay in place.

Despite protests and lobbying from the golfing industry and players, the Provincial government has announced that the ban on golfing will remain for the duration of the current stay-at-home order.

The golfing industry insists the sport is safe and that they follow protocols on the courses to keep people distanced and sanitized.

Even the panel of medical professionals who pressured the government to put the stay-at-home order in place say outdoor sports are safe.

However, the Ford government says it's not that playing golf itself is considered unsafe, it's the fact that golf encourages people to travel between different regions to play the game and this allows for the transmission of the virus between different communities.

The science table also was very clear that they did not want people to be moving around, to be transmitting through movement between regions, communities, said Solicitor General Sylvia Jones, on Tuesday, May 11, adding that the fact that medical professionals don't want people to travel, yet say golf is safe, is contradictory.

We don't have a golf course at the end of every street, so we have to make sure that people continue to understand that the stay-at-home order is in to avoid unnecessary movement, Jones said. Frankly, a lot of outdoor recreation when you go long distances to participate in those encourages the movement that we don't want and that leads to transmissions.

The same logic has been applied to the fact that tennis courts and basketball courts have also been closed.

Local courses are feeling the pressure of having to remain closed until at least June 3.

While the courses can't open, they still have to be maintained - which costs money.

Some courses have already said that if the ban continues through June they will be closing for good.