

## **MEDIA RELATIONS**

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**Renfrew County  
2023**

Ontario  
Winter Games  
Jeux d'hiver de  
l'Ontario



**FOR  
IMMEDIATE  
RELEASE**

### **RELEASE DATE:**

February 1, 2023

## **Outdoor Opening Ceremonies kick off Renfrew County 2023 Ontario Winter Games February 2 in Renfrew**

It's finally time for the Games to begin! After more than two years of planning by the Games Organizing Committee and work behind the scenes by numerous volunteers, the Renfrew County 2023 Ontario Winter Games officially open February 2.

The Opening Ceremonies will be held outdoors at Ma-te-Way Park in Renfrew February 2 beginning at 6:30 p.m. The area will be open at 5:30 p.m., so it is recommended people don't arrive too early as it is expected to be cold and windy Thursday evening. Attendees are encouraged to dress appropriately for the weather.

The ceremony will feature the athletes' parade as participants are led into the stadium by the Pipes and Drums and colour party. The ceremony will open with a land acknowledgement, traditional smudging and drumming. Following a torch parade, the cauldron will be lit and the festivities will culminate with a fireworks display.

A number of dignitaries will participate by offering remarks, including video messages from the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario; and the Honourable Neil Lumsden, Ontario's Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport and in-person addresses by Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke MPP John Yakabuski, Chief Wendy Jocko of the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan, Games Ambassador Melissa Bishop-Nriagu and Renfrew County Warden Peter Emon, Chair of the Games Organizing Committee. Representatives from a number of Games' presenting partners will also offer remarks.

"We are really proud of the work of our volunteers over the last two years to present the best games ever, which truly will represent our community," said Warden Emon. "We are excited to welcome athletes, officials and guests and encourage them to come and enjoy some Renfrew County hospitality."

There is a section for sponsor displays and food trucks at the Opening Ceremonies and Ontario Winter Games merchandise will be available for purchase on site.

Because of the ceremonies, Ma-te-Way Park Drive will be closed to the public as of 4 p.m. Thursday so those attending the ceremonies are asked to enter using Dufferin Street and they will be directed to the public parking area. From there, it's a 10-minute walk to the Opening Ceremony location on the ball field west of the Ma-te-Way Activity Centre or people can take a horse and wagon ride which will provide transportation from the parking area. There are metal bleachers available for spectators, so it might be wise to bring a blanket or cushion to sit on or a folding chair if possible. There will be fire pits on site.

Joffrey and Haig Avenues will be closed at Ma-te-Way Park Drive. Area residents will be able to access their homes, but they are asked to use Dufferin Street.

The Renfrew County 2023 Ontario Winter Games are taking place February 2-5 and February 9-12 and will feature approximately 2,000 athletes and 1,000 coaches and managers competing in 22 sports at venues across Renfrew County.

In order to provide the Games experience for all athletes, a second Opening Ceremony will be held at Ma-te-Way Park on February 9 to kick off the second weekend of competition.

Volunteers are still needed for both weekends. If interested in getting involved, please visit [renfrewcounty2023.ca/volunteer/](https://renfrewcounty2023.ca/volunteer/) to register and choose your shifts.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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