



Press Release - For Immediate Release

Wednesday April 1, 2020 6:30 PM

CONFIRMED COMMUNITY SPREAD - EASTERN IDAHO PUBLIC HEALTH (EIPH)

EIPH is reporting a positive COVID-19 test result for a male in his 50s in Teton County. This man is hospitalized and has an underlying medical condition. The case has no recent travel history or contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case. Therefore, we are identifying this case as community transmission of COVID-19---the first confirmation of this in Teton County.

Community transmission means the spread of illness for which the source of the infection is unknown and cannot be connected to travel or close contact with a person who tested positive for COVID-19. In addition to Teton County, community transmission of COVID-19 has been identified in our health district (Madison and Jefferson Counties), neighboring jurisdictions (Bingham County), and adjacent states (Wyoming, Montana, Utah, Oregon, and Washington). Community transmission of COVID-19 knows no borders. Once community transmission occurs, the assumption is that the virus that causes COVID-19 will be everywhere, sooner than later.

“As we have watched the progression of this pandemic across the nation and Idaho, we knew that at some point we would experience community transmission. This is where the Governor’s Stay Home order really comes into play to help us slow the spread. If you have not been taking this matter seriously, today is the time to understand the gravity of the situation,” stated Geri Rackow, EIPH Director. “Right now, we are not going to be able to stop the virus—it is going to continue spreading throughout our communities. If you get sick, assume you have COVID-19. In order to slow it down, and not overwhelm our healthcare providers and hospitals, everyone needs to stay home at the first sign of even the mildest of symptoms to help prevent it from being spread to others. However, always remember to seek medical attention for severe symptoms—whether it is COVID-19 related or not. We don’t want people delaying medical care when it is appropriate and putting themselves at further risk.”

Due to limited testing supplies nationwide, testing for COVID-19 has been prioritized for specific populations. This, coupled with community transmission of COVID-19, makes it even more urgent than ever to follow the recommendations of public health which include:

- Following the Stay at Home order, which was announced by Governor Brad Little on Wednesday, March 25. A copy of the order can be found here: www.EIPH.Idaho.gov.
- Practicing social-distancing (maintaining at least 6 feet between individuals), avoiding crowds of any number, and eliminating all non-essential travel, as detailed in the order.

- Staying home when sick even if your symptoms are mild.
- Covering your coughs and sneezes with a tissue, avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands, cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces, washing hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, using hand sanitizer, and avoiding close contact with people who are sick.
- Individuals at an increased risk of severe illness (older adults and people with underlying health conditions) should take extra precautions to avoid exposure to COVID-19.

MORE INFORMATION:

- Visit www.EIPH.Idaho.gov. You can also follow us on Facebook at @EIPH.Idaho.
- Hotline number: 208-522-0310 or 855-533-3160 (toll free). The hotline is active Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- ID Department of Health and Welfare hotline: 888-330-3010, Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

STICKING TO THE GOAL

Bottom line: we have the facts, now we need to focus on the goal. Waiting for higher numbers has proven fatal in other communities. We must learn from that and avoid making the same mistakes. We MUST slow the spread of COVID-19. Lives in our community depend on it.

STATISTICS UPDATE

World Update	National Update	Idaho Update
928,319 total cases	205,520 total cases	524 total cases
46,512 deaths	4,619 deaths	9 deaths
4,310 deaths in last 24 hrs	22,741 new cases in last 24 hrs	110 cases since yesterday

“On March 1, the U.S. had fewer than 100 confirmed cases of the new coronavirus and just two deaths. A month later, the majority of states have issued stay-at-home orders and the country now has nearly a quarter of confirmed cases globally, with more than 206,200 infections, according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. More than 4,500 people have died,” Wall Street Journal.

TETON VALLEY HEALTH (TVH)

TVH reported that the alternative care facility has been set up and they are now working to ensure all needed supplies for the facility are available. TVH would like to also emphasize the importance for everyone in our community to adhere to restrictions defined in the Governor’s stay at home order. Slowing the spread of COVID-19 helps ensure the safety of hospital workers and the ability for the hospital to provide care to all patients who need it.

CONSTRUCTION/JOB SITE POLICY IN PROGRESS

The Board of County Commissioners met today to discuss the possibility of adopting an ordinance to further restrict the Governor’s stay at home order. (Restrictions adopted by the County would not apply within the cities.) Specific restrictions were discussed for construction projects and job sites. Over 75 emails and phone calls were received regarding the issue. As a result, it was decided that the Teton County Building Department would create a policy that would require construction

companies and job sites to adhere to various restrictions in order to stay in operation. As long as those restrictions are met, construction may continue. It is not the intention to shut down construction but parameters need to be put in place and followed in order to protect employees and the public. The Board of County Commissioners will meet to further discuss and possibly approve the proposed policy on Friday April 3, 2020 at 1:00 pm. You may listen to the meeting by visiting: <http://tetoncountyid.igm2.com/Citizens/Default.aspx> In addition, the cities of Victor, Driggs, and Tetonida are considering similar restrictions and policies within their jurisdictions. Please stay tuned to understand these policies as they are implemented.

MENTAL HEALTH

When you're isolated at home, feelings of anxiety, loneliness, or worry may become overwhelming. Experiencing these feelings is common during times of heightened stress. Don't be afraid to reach out. We're here to help! The Department of Health and Welfare has opened a COVID-19 Behavioral Health Distress Line.

Please Call: 888-330-3010

BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

The Teton Regional Economic Coalition (TREC) is working to find resources for local businesses to overcome the impacts of COVID-19. Several relief options are now available. [Click here](#) for details.

Together we will get through this.

TETON VALLEY STRONG!