UNIFIED GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS REPORT RAPID RISE IN COVID-19 CASES IN WYANDOTTE COUNTY

KCK Police, Wyandotte County Sheriff to Step Up Enforcement of the Stay-At-Home Order

There has been a significant increase this week in the number of COVID-19 cases in Wyandotte County, reported officials with the Unified Government serving Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas.

“As of this afternoon, we have 137 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Wyandotte County,” said Dr. Allen Greiner, Chief Medical Officer with the Unified Government. “That’s a 191 percent increase in positive cases since one week ago. We know that Wyandotte County’s population is uniquely vulnerable to COVID-19 because of the number of residents with underlying conditions and without health insurance. We have taken aggressive action in the Kansas City region and State of Kansas, but we must be even more diligent to take care of our community in Wyandotte County.”

Greiner warned that the peak of the outbreak is still weeks away. “We are in the early days of this outbreak,” said Greiner. “The epidemiological models we are using show that the peak number of cases won’t occur until at least the end of April. That’s why it’s vitally important that our residents and businesses comply with the Stay-At-Home Order and practice social distancing so we can slow down the spread of COVID-19 in our community.”

Unified Government Employee Death from COVID-19

Mayor David Alvey shared the news that the newest confirmed death was that of a 64-year old man who had been a long-time employee of the Unified Government’s Parks and Recreation Department.

“It’s always tragic to lose a member of our community,” said Alvey. “To lose a member of our Unified Government family hits particularly close to home. Our prayers are with his family at this very sad time.”

Clusters of Cases

In another development, Dr. Greiner announced that at the Riverbend Post Acute Care Center at 7850 Freeman, seventeen patients have tested positive for COVID-19, out of 135 total residents. Six of these 17 patients are now hospitalized. Two staff members have also tested positive for COVID-19.

Over the past several weeks, there have also been three clusters of COVID-19 confirmed positives related to religious activities. While religious activities are considered exempt from the Kansas Stay-At-Home order, the Health Department strongly encourages those who practice faith to do so remotely.
On March 21, Mayor David Alvey announced that Dr. Greiner had issued a Public Health Order requiring residents to Stay-At-Home. Although this order was superseded by Governor Laura Kelly’s March 28, 2020, Statewide Stay-At-Home Executive Order, both orders stress the importance of practicing social distancing to slow the spread of COVID-19.

"Everyone in our community must comply with the Stay-At-Home Order and practice social distancing," said Dr. Greiner. “This means staying six feet or more away from everyone possible – even if they don’t have the symptoms of COVID-19. If we work together to slow the spread of COVID-19, we can protect ourselves, our families and our Wyandotte County community."

Police, Sheriff Stepping Up Enforcement Efforts
Under the Stay-At-Home order, residents are required to stop participating in non-essential activities, and non-essential businesses are no longer allowed to continue operations until at least April 19. To mitigate the escalating spread of COVID-19, the Kansas City, Kansas Police Department and the Wyandotte County Sheriff’s Office will begin stepping up enforcement of the Stay-At-Home Order in Kansas City, Kansas and Wyandotte County, beginning April 3. Violators are subject to a $500 fine.

“We know our residents want to be safe, and want their families and neighbors to be safe, so our hope is that all community members will voluntarily follow the Stay at Home Order,” said Mayor Alvey. “But if it becomes necessary, we will enforce this order in an effort to protect the health of everyone we serve.”

Residents can report any businesses or individuals whom they believe are not complying with the Stay-At-Home Order by calling the Kansas City, Kansas Police Department’s special reporting line at (913) 225-4788. The line is staffed from 8 AM to 5 PM Monday through Friday. During other hours, calls should be made to the KCKPD non-emergency number, (913) 596-3000. When leaving a message, residents should include their name, a call-back number, the address of the business or individual believed to be non-compliant, a contact name for the business (when possible), and the nature of the perceived violation.

Residents with COVID-19 symptoms should call their primary healthcare provider or self-report their symptoms at www.wycokck.org/COVID-19 or by calling 3-1-1.

Resources provided by the Unified Government include:
- www.wycokck.org/COVID-19 - self reporting, news releases and lots of additional resources
- 3-1-1 call line for residents who have questions

Media Contacts:
Janell Friesen, Public Information Officer
Unified Government Public Health Department
COVID-19 media requests: (913) 573-672
All other Health Department media requests (913) 573-6703
Jfriesen@wycokck.org

Nancy Chartrand, Media Relations Specialist/Public Information Officer
Kansas City, Kansas Police Department
(913) 573-6168
(913) 201-1418
pio@kckpd.org

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