

Urgent News Release #59

Richland County Emergency Management

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RICHLAND COUNTY COMMUNITY PARTNERS RESPOND TO PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

Richland Center, WI: A virtual Emergency Operations Center meeting was held this morning to share information between Richland County officials and community partners in a joint response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Public Health Manager/Local Health Officer, Rose Kohout announced that as of 2:00pm Monday, May 18th the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) confirmed that in the state of Wisconsin there were 12,687 confirmed cases of COVID-19, 144,502 have tested negative, there were 459 deaths, and 2,068 hospitalizations due to COVID-19. Of those that tested positive for COVID-19 in the state of Wisconsin, 16% have been hospitalized. There are 14 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Richland County, 451 have tested negative, and there have been 3 deaths as a result of COVID-19 at this time. Kohout also reported that 9 individuals who had tested positive for COVID-19 in Richland County have been released from quarantine.

The Richland Hospital continues to phase in the reopening of their building and services.

Non-emergent surgical procedures are being performed now; working through a risk

stratification plan from low to high risk patients. A “soft launch” of Primary Care visits at the Richland Hospital campus will expand over the next 4-6 weeks. Primary Care visits will also continue at the Muscoda Health Center and the Spring Green Medical Center during this time. The Richland Hospital Coronavirus Hotline remains available 24 hours a day 7 days a week and patients are still being instructed to call (608) 604-9953 BEFORE coming to the hospital. The Richland Hospital continues to offer their “Respiratory Illness Evaluation” drive-thru service from **8am-Noon** 7 days a week and COVID-19 testing is being offered to anyone displaying symptoms.

Richland County Administrator, Clinton Langreck reported that the Richland County Board will consider extending the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency Disaster Proclamation during their meeting tonight. This extension would offer Richland County the ability to continue applying for state and federal funding/resources for its internal emergency response operations. It was noted that the Richland Center City Council will be considering two city parades: a Memorial Day Parade on May 25th and a Richland Center High School Senior Class of 2020 Parade on May 31st.

Richland School District PIO, Shaun Tjossem announced that the Richland School Board met last night and approved, based upon the Richland Center High School senior survey results, the proposed plan to recognize their senior class with an in-person ceremony following social distancing and mass gatherings guidance on July 12th. If public health concerns remain on that date, a virtual ceremony will be held instead.

One of the four key COVID-19 testing goal features of Governor Tony Evers Badger Bounce Back Plan is the testing of every nursing home resident and staff member in the State of Wisconsin. Our Pine Valley Community Village and Schmitt Woodland Hills partners report that they are preparing to conduct these tests before the end of May.

Richland County Community Partners shared the status of their individual organization's emergency response, reviewed staffing and PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) needs and local inventory, and discussed priority topics to support the community through the recovery process. The Whole Community Recovery Steering Committee has been meeting regularly to identify the economic impact of COVID-19 on Richland County families and determine a suitable long-term recovery structure for our citizens.

If you have a COVID-19 question that you want our community partners to answer, please call Richland County Health & Human Services at 608-647-8821 and submit your question to the receptionist or email the question to rchs@co.richland.wi.us. Citizens are encouraged to check out the Richland County COVID-19 Dashboard which offers helpful data to better understand the impact of the pandemic globally and locally: <https://covid.co.richland.wi.us/2020/04/21/richland-county-covid-19-dashboard/>. For the most up-to-date COVID-19 information, follow Richland County Health & Human Services on Facebook or consult the following websites:

- ❖ Richland County:
<https://covid.co.richland.wi.us>
- ❖ The Greater Richland Area Chamber of Commerce
www.gorcchamber.com
- ❖ Wisconsin Department of Health Services:
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19

❖ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/

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