

Urgent News Release #135

Richland County Emergency Management

Darin Gudgeon, Director

(608) 647-8187

darin.gudgeon@co.richland.wi.us

Rose Kohout, Health Officer

(608) 649-5965

rose.kohout@co.richland.wi.us

For immediate release: **December 22, 2020**

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, December 21st the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) confirmed that in the state of Wisconsin there were 458,612 confirmed cases of COVID-19, 2,299,265 have tested negative, there were 4,425 deaths, and 20,168 hospitalizations due to COVID-19. Of those that tested positive for COVID-19 in the state of Wisconsin, 4% have been hospitalized.

Emergency Operations partners have decided to offer more up-to-date local data on the condition of our county that might not match the numbers offered by the State. Public Health Manager/Local Health Officer, Rose Kohout announced that as of 8:00am Tuesday, December 22nd there are 1,026 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Richland County, 7,880 have tested negative, there are 352 active cases, and 661 individuals who

had tested positive have been released from quarantine. Of those 1,026 individuals who tested positive, 1,013 individuals have been recovering at home, 52 have been hospitalized at some point, and there were 13 COVID-19 related deaths.

Richland Hospital Emergency Management Coordinator, Lyle Kratochwill announced that the Richland Hospital received their first shipment of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine on Thursday, December 17th and was able to vaccinate 63 of their frontline health care workers. Another Pfizer vaccine shipment is anticipated to arrive today, which will also be administered to frontline health care workers, as Phase 1a of the Wisconsin COVID-19 Response Plan continues to progress. Kratochwill reports that the Richland Hospital anticipates to receive additional allocations of the Pfizer vaccine on a weekly basis and the Wisconsin COVID-19 Response Plan will be followed to eventually offer vaccines to the general public. Additional information can be found at www.richlandhospital.com.

The Richland Hospital continues to offer COVID-19 drive-thru testing from **11 am to 4 pm Monday thru Friday** for hospital & clinic patients displaying COVID-19 symptoms or to those that have a confirmed exposure. All persons requesting testing will need to call the Richland Hospital and be registered BEFORE arriving at the drive-thru. The Richland Hospital Clinic campus continues to offer voluntary medical procedures and Primary Care visits, while also continuing to offer Tele-Health patient visits. Richland Hospital Clinic patients needing hands-on medical care for any COVID-19 symptoms should call the hospital main number (608) 647-6321 or clinic main number (608) 647-6161 BEFORE coming to the facility.

There are NO FREE COVID-19 testing events being offered in Richland County the week of December 28th. The FREE COVID-19 Testing schedule for events offered in

Richland County are as follows (this schedule is tentative and subject to change):

JANUARY 2021			
Monday, January 4 th	9am-Noon	Richland County Fairgrounds	Richland County Event
Thursday, January 7 th	9am-3pm	Richland County Fairgrounds	WI National Guard Event
Monday, January 11 th	9am-Noon	Richland County Fairgrounds	Richland County Event
Thursday, January 14 th	9am-3pm	Richland County Fairgrounds	WI National Guard Event
Monday, January 18 th	9am-Noon	Richland County Fairgrounds	Richland County Event
Thursday, January 21 st	9am-3pm	Richland County Fairgrounds	WI National Guard Event
Monday, January 25 th	9am-Noon	Richland County Fairgrounds	Richland County Event
Thursday, January 28 th	9am-3pm	Richland County Fairgrounds	WI National Guard Event

Richland County residents are encouraged to sign-up for NIXLE alerts by texting 53581 to 888777 or go to www.nixle.com to sign-up to receive emails. You will then receive up-to-date alerts regarding local COVID testing sites and clinics, severe weather, public safety, criminal activities, missing persons, traffic issues, and local events.

Individuals who have been tested for COVID-19 **WILL** receive their results from a testing site or healthcare provider. However, due to record high numbers of COVID-19 cases, Public Health has reached capacity and may not call you to complete a contact tracing investigation. For this reason, we ask that any newly diagnosed person with COVID-19 begin to isolate themselves immediately and go to the Richland County COVID-19 webpage at <https://covid.co.richland.wi.us/if-you-are-sick-or-have-been-exposed/> in order to receive isolation and contact tracing notification guidance.

Richland County Community Partners shared the status of their individual organization's emergency response, reviewed staffing levels and PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)

inventory, and discussed priority topics to assist with preventing the further transmission of COVID-19 in our community.

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>
- ❖ University of Wisconsin – Platteville Richland
<https://www.uwplatt.edu/news/update-coronavirus>
- ❖ The Greater Richland Area Chamber of Commerce
www.gorchamber.com
- ❖ Wisconsin Department of Health Services:
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19
- ❖ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/

-End-