

KITTITAS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH  
VIDEO UPDATE  
Tuesday, December 1, 2020

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Today's video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vsyN6LELxYo>

KCPHD channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyQzBwJLbkLj7WueKJ5w7mQ/>

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Good morning, it's Mark Larson talking about COVID-19 in Kittitas County.

Today I'm going to talk about where we are currently with our numbers, about Thanksgiving vacation, what our needs are here at Public Health, and maybe a little bit about COVID-19 vaccines.

Our numbers are very high. To go into Phase 3, we had to have an incident rate below 25 cases per 100,000 for 14 days. To open schools, we had to be below 75 cases per 100,000 for 14 days. Last week we were at 238.4 cases per 100,000 for 14 days, which was about 120 cases that Public Health was managing in that period of time.

This past week, we've had 189 cases, and our incident rate is 405.8. That's *really* high.

Regarding the percent positive rate, the goal is to be at less than 2%. Last week we were at 7.9% and this week we're at 9.3%. Even though we're doing more testing, we have more percent positives.

We're having more difficulty getting all the case and contact investigations done because of the high number of cases we have.

The hospital is not overwhelmed with COVID-19 cases, yet. We have had minimal influenza, probably secondary to masking and social distancing. There's a benefit there.

Looking at the cases from a couple of days ago, going back 14 days, we're at 536 cases per 100,000 for 14 days. We're still on an upward trend, along with Washington state as a whole. Hospitalizations and death rates are going up slowly.

For the month of November, Kittitas County had 43 cases among Central Washington University students and 335 cases in the

community. That's why there's such an increase in the numbers.

We know that the majority of this is related to all of us getting together for Halloween, and during that period of time.

Now we've had a second large celebration, Thanksgiving. We did ask people not to have Thanksgiving outside their immediate family in order to reduce the numbers; we want to keep businesses and schools open. But a lot of people chose to still meet their extended families for Thanksgiving.

So, similar to the governor's ask to quarantine for 14 days, if you either went outside (or came from outside the state), and/or if you went to someone's house that was outside your immediate family for Thanksgiving, you should consider yourself infected with COVID-19, and you should be tested at the COVID Clinic on the hospital campus. It's taking two days to get those results back.

You have to assume that with the numbers of cases that we have in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho that you're probably infected with COVID-19 if you went somewhere for Thanksgiving. Please get tested so we can do the case and contact investigation to ramp that down.

We have two more weeks with the governor's restrictions. Perhaps we can get our numbers down so those restrictions can go away.

We're asking you to be tested if you went somewhere over Thanksgiving.

If you're going out of state to play basketball, do sports, or go to church outings, you should quarantine for 14 days when you return. You should not go to school. Going out of state is a choice, but if you do that, we don't want you to put other people at risk. You also should assume you were infected.

We have a lot more COVID-19 vaccine coming down the pike; three are being looked at for FDA approval. Getting the vaccines up and running has been a fast process, but the quality and safety controls with those have been as strict as any other vaccine that has been in development. Washington, Oregon, and California are looking at the date independently of the FDA to make sure they're safe.

We should be getting delivery of the vaccine in Washington state in the next couple of weeks. Initially, the vaccine will go to

health care providers and first responders, and then it will start being spread out amongst others, like frontline grocery store workers, teachers, and people in nursing homes. We're hoping to have enough of the vaccine by late spring so that anyone who wants the vaccine can get it. We hope that is the majority of people.

Make sure to take good care of yourself. We are responsible for each other. The decisions we make as individuals have an effect on others, so please keep looking out for your neighbors, wear a face covering and maintain social distancing so that we can keep businesses open. That is your responsibility. Thanks a lot. See you next week.

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