

KITTITAS COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH  
VIDEO UPDATE  
Tuesday, November 3, 2020

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Today's video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3I10e\\_1XfhE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3I10e_1XfhE)

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

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Good morning. It's Dr. Larson to talk about COVID-19 in Kittitas County.

As you know, we are currently in Phase 3 of the Washington Reopening Plan. Everyone wants to know when we'll be in Phase 4 but there is no prediction on that right now. Phase 4 is basically everything open, everyone doing what they want to do, etc. That's not really possible in the foreseeable future.

There may be some work that happens after Election Day that could maybe see the development of a Phase 3.5, allowing restaurants to be open a little bit more, allowing holiday parties such as at local hotels and restaurants, etc.

For those things to happen, we have to work together.

[Phone dinging.] Sorry about that.

I will talk a little bit about the Swiss cheese model. To make our COVID-19 mitigation factors work, they have to work together. For example, you can't count on masking alone to be the end-all, be-all. We also have to have six foot social distancing and look at the individual choices we make. Will I go to my sister's 45th birthday party? Will I fly to Wisconsin for Thanksgiving? Will I have a holiday party at my house?

We all have to choose to keep our bubbles small or this approach will not work. The COVID-19 vaccine will not work in and of itself. The Swiss cheese model is when you layer slices of the cheese together -- with this layering, all the holes get blocked. That's what this is all about.

In regard to school reopening, we have co-horting, we have the hybrid model, we have masking and social distancing, we have

protocols for people working with kids in sports and music and the like, we have testing, we have hospital capacity, and we have the case and contact investigation through Public Health. All these things layered together will allow us to move forward.

Central Washington University is part of our community, and they are part of the layering effect. They are working really hard -- reducing dorm capacity, getting information to the students, developing a testing protocol, and offering exit testing for the students who leave for home (and then testing them when they come back). These things all play a role in allowing us to continue being safe, and moving forward.

Our incident rate in Kittitas County is 268.4 per 100,000 for 14 days. That is too high. About half of that is CWU -- the rest of the county is still above 150 cases per 100,000 for 14 days. That's about nine cases per day, which is happening through community spread.

We've had multiple cases in the schools since Kittitas and Ellensburg started, but we haven't seen any cases brought into the Kittitas and Ellensburg schools and then transmitted within the school. We've not had outbreaks in the schools, nor have we had secondary transmission.

That tells us that the Swiss cheese things are working. They're maintaining social distancing, testing, etc.

We have not yet seen significant transmission among the students from CWU to the people in the community. There's only been one such case. That tells us that CWU is keeping their bubble small, which is good.

My ask for you today is to continue to wear masks, to social distance, and to make good choices in keeping your bubbles small. Look ahead to Thanksgiving and Christmas to see what you as an individual can do to lower the risk of COVID-19 in Kittitas County, allowing our schools to stay open, our businesses to grow, for us to stay safe, and to not overwhelm the hospital system.

Be kind. We'll get through COVID-19, we'll get through whatever happens with the election, and we'll look forward. Talk to you later. Thanks, bye.

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