

Town of Middlebury
Emergency Management Bulletin
November 24, 2020

Sports Are on Pause

Today the Governor announced that sports will not be cleared for play on November 30. Sports –youth leagues and scholastic- are paused indefinitely as the progress of COVID growth is monitored. So pack up the hockey bag and put the b-balls back on the cart for another day.

An indication of the COVID growth status: There were more new infections in November in Vermont than there were from March through July. Things may be easing a bit, “only” 49 new cases posted today following the average of 85 a day for the prior three days. But we now have 27 people hospitalized and the death toll for VT is up to 64. 31 new cases in Addison County in the past 2 weeks. Unlike spring and summer, COVID infections today were spread around the entire state. In K-12 statewide, the aggregate case count since school opened is 110- students were primarily infected by community transmission outside the school environment.

And Across the Fruited Plain...

170,000 new cases a day recently, nationwide. If that doesn't encourage you to mask up, you're just in denial. Some questions posed today regarding holiday gatherings – how many infected people will show up to a gathering? How many people will leave a gathering infected? And of those, how many over the next few days will unwittingly infect others? The answer, my friend, isn't blowing in the wind... we all hold the answer within us. Only time will tell. By the second week of December the answer will be abundantly clear. Maybe “Men At Work” had some idea what to do if an infected person showed up for Thanksgiving dinner: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SECVGN4Bsgg>

As COVID Spreads, So Do Crooks..Beware

Thanks to Robin Scheu for passing this along from the VT Dept of Labor:

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ALERTS VERMONTERS TO ACTIVE PHISHING SCAM

Montpelier, Vt. – The Vermont Department of Labor has received multiple reports of fraudulent communications relating to unemployment insurance benefits being sent to Vermonters. The Department reminds Vermonters filing for UI to be diligent in preventing fraud and to report any potential fraud to the Department of Labor and Attorney General's Office.

On Monday and early Tuesday morning, the Department received information detailing two different communications in which the senders fraudulently state that ‘eligible workers’ could ‘receive COVID-19 Benefits’ from ‘the Department of Labor’.

Text Message

- Sent from ‘tiona.sykes@lcmchealth.org’
- Details how the Department will pay eligible workers \$3,750 in COVID benefits and compensation, starting on Tuesday November 24, 2020
- Provides fraudulent link to ‘Register’ and ‘Apply’

Email

- Sent from 'Hao Ran Xia <978269@learn.vsb.bc.ca>'
- Details how the Department will pay eligible workers \$3,750 in COVID benefits and compensation, starting on Monday, November 23, 2020
- Provides link to 'COVID-19 Benefits' page to register

The Department is currently working with the State IT security team, the Vermont Attorney General's Office, State Police, and multiple federal law enforcement agencies to respond to this issue. Claimants are reminded to be vigilant of potential fraud and only use its official website (labor.vermont.gov), and sub-pages, to apply and file for unemployment insurance benefits. To report suspected fraud activity to the Department of Labor, and for more information on prevention, go to labor.vermont.gov/ui-fraud.

These are among the dozens of fishing texts bombarding the state recently with everything from eliciting you to click on a link for some type of benefit- get a new iPhone , claiming a prize, winning a trip, etc etc. The only response should be read no further and then DELETE DELETE DELETE NOT click click click.

Testing

As VDH gets overwhelmed with contact tracing, and we get into a holiday period, testing registration remains a bit challenging. No new information either from the contractor, CIC, or VDH on streamlining the process or adding more dates to the registration process. Keep the faith, it will get better.