

Town of Middlebury  
Emergency Management Bulletin  
December 4, 2020

**COVID Case Increase Reported Yesterday**

We passed along a report from VDH that 178 new cases of COVID were registered yesterday. That number is now up to 224. However, and this a big HOWEVER, those inflated numbers were due to a reporting backlog at UVM, some of those positives went back a couple of weeks. Also contributing to that number was the new inclusion of unverified probables. So no, we didn't suddenly get 178 or 224 new cases overnight, what we DID get was a collection of dated reports.

This doesn't mean we can toss out the masks and gather and have a big hooley. Our numbers, by Vermont standards, are still pretty high. With 73 new cases today including 3 in Addison County.

**New Publication Method for Town by Town Data**

Out with the old, in with the current. Starting today, the map of town-level COVID-19 activity will show data reflecting the past two weeks of activity. Until now, the maps displayed cumulative data going back to March. This change will offer a more current view of what's happening on a rolling basis. The town map reflects the rate of cases of COVID-19 among Vermont residents per 10,000 people, by town of residence. The map also includes a table that shows cumulative town counts since March. The map and the table are updated weekly.

**No Sports Yet**

Recreational and school sports remain on hold at this time. No end in sight until COVID numbers come down and things appear more under control through the winter season.

**Getting Tested at the REC Center – Do Not Enter the Building**

From Dustin Hunt, our Rec Director: "If you are visiting the pop-up testing site at the Rec. Center on Creek Road, please know that testing is not conducted in the building itself. Everyone wishing to get tested should remain in their car and use the first entrance near the baseball field. Registration/Check-In is taking place at the Red Booth (also known as the Cocoa Hut) and then the actual test itself will take place at the outbuilding located in the back parking lot"

**Wyoming Vs. Vermont**

Wyoming is far larger (square mile wise) than Vermont, far more rural, yet has a population of only 570,000. As of yesterday, Wyoming had an aggregate case total 34,507, 3,289 new cases in the past week, 17,907 new cases in the last 30 days. Wyoming has had 230 deaths. Vermont has had an aggregate total of 4,763 cases and 75 deaths. As concerning as our numbers are, we seem to be pretty far ahead of the rest of the country in containing viral spread. A point we should all be proud of.

**Vermont is Gearing Up**

The one thing our health department is doing is going after the reason for viral spread, though it may seem like it's a blanket one size-fits-all approach rendering some frustration, the recent surge has a definitive cause. Gatherings and ignoring quarantine. The increase in COVID in long term care facilities is the effect from the cause.

You go to a multi-household gathering, and one person is asymptomatic with COVID. You laugh joke, carry on, stay close. That person infects another, who is then infectious, but asymptomatic who then infects another, who then infects another, who infects a health care worker. By the time symptoms show up at the back of the line, it's too late. Contact tracers can't catch up to the daisy chain. The worst thing happens when the infected, asymptomatic person goes and visits great-grandma in the long term care facility and signs her death warrant.

To control this, testing is ramping up for skilled nursing facilities. Daily antigen testing (presumptive tests) and weekly PCR (confirmatory) tests. All the while VHD is prepping for vaccines to inoculate health care workers and vulnerable persons in long term care facilities.

### **Potential Storm and Sheltering**

In the unlikely need for sheltering this weekend from power outages, you may call the police department at 388-3191. Vermont Emergency Management has let us know that local shelters will not be used at first. American Red Cross will provide hotel space. Congregant sheltering is being dissuaded, however, the CDC has provided guidelines in a worst case scenario should that be necessary. Any power outage should be short term. Best to prepare for shelter in place. I don't believe the Red Cross will be providing lodging in 5-star resort hotels, just places that have sheltering capacity, and it may not be locally.