



April 3, 2020

Lavaca County reports second case of COVID-19

Lavaca County is reporting the second case of COVID-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus, in a county resident. Transmission of the virus is thought to be related to travel outside Lavaca County. The person is a resident of Lavaca County, Texas in the Shiner 77984 Zip Code. The person is currently experiencing mild symptoms and isolating at home, there was no community exposure in Lavaca County, State health officials will not confirm the age or gender of the patient.

The Texas Department of State Health Services is supporting Lavaca County in identifying any close contacts of the patient while they were sick, so they can be isolated and monitored for symptoms and quickly tested, if needed.

Lavaca County Emergency Management Coordinator Egon Barthels is communicating with other state officials and leaders across the state about the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Texas Department of Emergency Management and the Department of State Health Services are coordinating efforts and identify resources that can be mobilized if a need arises that local resources may not be sufficient to meet. There are no unmet needs at this time.

Fighting the spread of this virus is the duty of everyone in our community according to Lavaca County Judge Keith Mudd. Health experts are learning that an individual can have COVID-19 and be asymptomatic for several days before symptoms appear.

Judge Mudd implores county residents to heed the advice of the medical experts. "If you are feeling bad, stay home, and do not interact with other individuals if at all possible," says Mudd. "Be mindful that others may be asymptomatic and expose you to the virus," he adds, "It works both ways."

If travel can be avoided, the opportunity for travel-related exposure declines. When it comes to community spread of the virus there are things everyone can do to help prevent the person-to-person transmission of COVID-19.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then wash your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Minimizing exposure is especially important for people who are 65 or older or who have an underlying health condition like heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, high blood pressure or cancer. People in those groups have a higher risk of developing severe disease if they do get COVID-19, and the safest thing for them during an outbreak will be to stay home as much as possible and minimize close contact with other people. To get ready, they should talk to their doctor about getting additional prescription medications and have enough household items and groceries on hand to stay home as needed.

The public can find up-to-date coronavirus information at dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus and follow Lavaca County, Texas Office of Emergency Management for additional information and announcements on <https://www.facebook.com/LavacaOEM/>.

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