



Kit Carson County Department of Public Health and Environment
252 South 14th Street
Burlington, CO 80807
719-346-7158, ext. 116

MEDIA RELEASE

August 11, 2020

Release: IMMEDIATE

From: Dawn James, Kit Carson County Department of Public Health and Environment Director, PIO

COVID – WEEK 24 UPDATE

Since the beginning of the COVID pandemic response on March 2nd, Kit Carson County has tested and screened 1,059 people. There have been 66 positive cases since March 2nd. These results represent an overall positivity rate of 6%. Prior to the recent increase in cases, the mean positivity rate was 5%.

Since June 30th, 400 Kit Carson County residents have been tested and 87 non-residents have been tested. Updated current KCC positive case count from June 30, 2020 through August 11, 2020 is 32. This equates to an overall positivity rate of 8% for that 40 day period of time. Seven people are currently in isolation and 4 remain in quarantine. Twenty people have been release from isolation since the beginning of August.

We have been able to directly link 13 positive cases to those who attended the event in Goodland, Kansas on July 18th. Six additional cases are those who were in close contact (family and co-workers), but did not attend the event. The Health Department has actively sought-out individuals who could have been at the event, however, if people do not want to self-report or be tested, public health has no way of knowing who those individuals are. The cases that have been tested include many who self-reported when they found out about the COVID illnesses associated with the event, thus the incredible increase of testing that has occurred between July 20th and the time of this writing. The health department is reporting accurate and complete test results in as timely a manner as possible, and are not withholding any information from the public.

While having a variance is important to the community, public health's main concern is for public safety. If at any time, indications point to an unsafe level of illness in the county, public health will make a recommendation to initiate a mitigation plan to the County Board of Health. A mitigation plan is developed to stop the increase in infection,

while perhaps placing the variances on hold for a period of time until the infection rate has returned to 5% or less positivity rate.

Kit Carson County's variances currently remain in place. However, continued increase in prevalence of infections may result in stepping back and implementing a mitigation plan to stop the spread as necessary and needed for public safety. The public's assistance with stopping additional infections will help everyone maintain our current variances. This includes wearing face coverings when in public settings, frequently washing hands, using good cough/sneeze etiquette and refraining from going to work or school when not feeling well and being tested if you believe you may have COVID. Of utmost importance to the health department is the safety of the residents of Kit Carson County. Public Health's duty is "to investigate and control the causes of epidemic and communicable diseases affecting the public health." (C.R.S. 25-1.5-102). This includes "establishing, maintaining, and enforcing isolation and quarantine..." Public Health cannot do this alone, it takes everyone in the community to help stop the spread of disease.

Testing for COVID is available at the health department Monday through Friday. Friday is "free Friday" and has been set aside for asymptomatic people who have no insurance. Free Friday is limited to the first 10 people who request being tested and is first come first serve. An appointment is required. To set up an appointment for a COVID test, call 719-346-7158.

Thank you to the many community members who are following the social distancing guidelines and to those who have stepped forward to be tested in an effort to keep everyone safe and healthy.

-end-