

Tuesday, July 14, 2020 – 3:45 pm

Based on information from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH website) and the Governor's press conference today:

While as a whole, Virginia's new COVID-19 case counts (and the % of positive test) are lower than many other states, the COVID-19 numbers are going up. Community spread is still occurring in Virginia. Overall, Virginia's % positivity rate is heading up from a low of about 5.9% of cases tested to about 6.8% of those tested.

The Eastern Region of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) (Hampton Roads, Middle Peninsula, Northern Neck, Eastern Shore) has been going up at a much faster rate than the rest of the Virginia Health Districts and the increase has been accelerating over the last few weeks. The Eastern Region is currently at 10.1% positivity. As a result, a significant portion of the overall state increase is currently coming from the greater Hampton Roads area. The Governor reminded everyone that we each have a responsibility to help keep the COVID-19 spread controlled and encouraged everyone, especially those in the Eastern Region, to do what we can to decrease the spread. He also noted that if the % positivity rates do not stabilize in the Eastern Region, that the Phase III guidelines for the Region could be restricted.

In Isle of Wight, excluding cases associated with an outbreak in a county long-term care facility, we saw our highest number of newly identified cases reported today (11 cases). The cases identified in IOW began to rise noticeably in June. Since July began, we've added 58 cases to our case count - nearly 25% of the total cases recorded in the county thus far (around 33% of total cases if we exclude the cases associated with the long-term care facility). The cases being recorded are located across the county - indicating that wide-spread community spread is occurring across our county. Based on contact tracing being done by the Western Tidewater Health Dept., it appears that social/community/family gatherings may be the largest contributor to the spread in our area.

It is as important to take appropriate safety precautions to keep you, your loved ones and employees/co-workers healthy.

- Practice social distancing – stay at least 6 foot away from others, whenever possible. Even if you are socializing with family and/or friends, remember to keep appropriate social distance.
- Wear a cloth face covering when in public, especially if you are not able to maintain social distancing. Remember, the mask you wear is as much - if not more - about not spreading COVID-19 to others. While you may have determined you are not at a significant risk from COVID-19, others around you may be at higher risk – do your part to keep them safe.
- Wash your hands frequently – use hand sanitizer when hand washing is not an option.
- Cover your cough and sneezes (remember CHICKEN WING!!).