

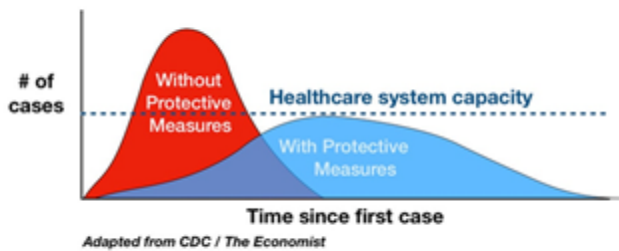
Friday, March 13, 2020 – 7:15 pm

The rapidly changing COVID-19 situation is changing even more rapidly. As of today's update, the Center for Disease Control is reporting 1,629 cases (+49 cases associated with individuals repatriated to the US from China or the Diamond Princess Cruise Ship) in the US with 46 states plus the District of Columbia now reporting COVID-19 cases. The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) is currently reporting 30 COVID-19 cases with 11 localities now reporting cases. Due to CDC and VDH reporting cutoffs and the rapidly changing situation, it is highly likely that all of these numbers are understated and you may be seeing higher numbers reported elsewhere due to timing issues.

We urge you to continue to review/develop Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) and personal preparedness plans to prepare for the potential of increased absenteeism, potential isolated closures/quarantines and other disruptions caused by the virus. Today, the Governor instituted mandatory K-12 closures across the state, events are being cancelled, daily operations for business and government agencies are starting to change, and supply disruptions are occurring; just to name a few impacts we are already seeing. It's very likely that we'll see these types of impacts/changes increase. We continue to encourage you to take advantage of the extensive resources available from the CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>) and the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) (www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus) to help you prepare, respond and adapt to COVID-19.

Current advice on the best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is exactly the same advice to prevent the spread of colds and flu. **Practice good hand hygiene and cough etiquette. Everyone should wash their hands with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers regularly. Those that develop a cough or a sneeze should do so into a tissue or the inside of their elbow, washing their hands afterwards.**

We've heard a number of people wonder why "everyone" seems so worried about COVID-19 if most of the cases may actually only result in mild to moderate symptoms. The primary goal continues to be preventing/slowing the spread of COVID-19 as much as possible; principally, by promoting good hand hygiene, cough etiquette and social distancing. The more limited (and slower) the spread of COVID-19, the better the systems we all have in place will be at adjusting to virus and its impacts. It's not so much a fear of the health impacts to individuals (not to discount this concern in anyway), but the ability to give our societal systems (including health, employment, food supply, education, etc.) the capacity they need to mitigate as many issues that arise from COVID-19 as possible. For example, if ICU beds and respirators in hospitals are limited to a finite number, the best chances those very sick patients will have is if we can prevent a surge in the healthcare system that would far exceed the hospital's capability. The graph below demonstrates this concept very well – if we can hold the spread to a more consistent manageable level over an extended period of time, versus a massive, overwhelming surge we will have the capacity to address issues as they arise and see less severe impacts. At the end of the outbreak, we may see the same number of infections, but the systems will not have been overwhelmed and the overall impact to our day-to-day lives may be much less significant.



The current situation is changing so rapidly that the best way to keep up with closures, etc. is now likely the local media or to reach out to the entity you are interested in directly. We will also try and keep significant closures or other changes to normal local government operations up-to-date on the county's website (<https://www.co.isle-of-wight.va.us/>) and facebook page (Isle of Wight County Virginia).

Local updates we are aware of as of 7pm Friday March 13th:

- The Governor declared a state of emergency March 12th.
- The Governor has closed all K-12 schools for a minimum of 2 weeks, beginning Monday March 16 – at least March 27.
- Isle of Wight County and the towns of Windsor and Smithfield declared states of emergency today. (This allows us the ability to reach out the state & federal level for some assistance and increases some flexibility in our preparation and response to CVOID-19.)
- The St. Patrick's Day Parade and Farmer's Market scheduled for Saturday have been cancelled. Additional, event cancellations/postponements are being considered on a case by case base and more will likely be announced in the coming days.
- We have not currently altered the county's normal operating hours or status – we will continue to assess the situation and make adjustments as necessary.
- Our county departments are actively reviewing their operation plans to ensure the least distribution as possible due to COVID-19 impacts. We will continue to assess the situation and operational adjustments as necessary.

Helpful links on Coronavirus:

- CDC – fact sheet – <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>
- CDC interim guidance for businesses and employers to plan/respond to COVID-19 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/guidance-business-response.html>
- VHD guidance for k-12 schools - http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/13/2020/02/VDH-2019-n-CoV-K-12-Guidance_FINAL_02042020.pdf
- Get Your Family Ready for Pandemic Flu - <https://www.cdc.gov/nonpharmaceutical-interventions/pdf/gr-pan-flu-ind-house.pdf>

Moving forward, our plan is to provide a weekly update unless circumstances warrant a more frequent update. The VDH webpage www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus is the best source for up-to-date information.