

Our City – COVID-19 – Essential Update

By: Mayor Marc Beitia

How you can help us help you:

- **Please practice Social Distancing** – 6 to 10 feet of separation between each other
- **Please practice Respiratory Hygiene** - sneeze or cough into your bent elbow
- **Please wash your hands frequently** - especially after touching hard surfaces and door knobs
- **Please disinfect hard surfaces regularly** – counter tops and door knobs
- **Please try not to touch your face** – eyes, nose or mouth
- **Please stay home if you are sick** – contact your healthcare provider

Thank you, to the **26 DONORS** who delivered the much-needed perishable groceries and supplies today. You made a huge difference to **10 HOUSEHOLDS** by this afternoon. More donations will be needed as we face what is to come; but, together we can all make American Falls the very best place to live, even in times such as these. Thank you all for doing your part! You do make a difference.

3:30 PM, March 19, 2020 – 11 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Idaho.

- Following the lead of Governor Little and our County Commissioner I declared a state of emergency in the City of American Falls today at Noon and the City Council pass a resolution confirming the declaration. The declaration and resolution are attached.
- The declaration will allow the City to do the following if needed:
 - ✓ Changing date, meeting place or method of holding council meetings. (change of meeting time and place should be by ordinance)
 - ✓ Restricting Access to certain places
 - ✓ Changing methods of bill payment
 - ✓ Limiting building occupancy
 - ✓ Establishing temporary rules for using parks or other city facilities
- At last night's City's Council meeting we discussed conducting meetings through video conferencing and will develop that method for the next meeting.
- Last night's Council discussion on COVID-19 has had over 1000 views on Facebook Live. We will like continue that practice moving forward through this event.
- We have restricted access to City Hall while we continue to offer the same services.
- Billing payments were modified as of 8:00 AM this morning, with all payment being received in our drop box or online.
- As mentioned previously temporary changes will be implemented at the Golf course; but we are still encouraging everyone to get out and play through.
- *I would kindly ask businesses to consider limiting your occupancy to 50% of allowable capacity. If you have the ability to offer drive-through or pick-up I would encourage that as well. Allow for Social Distancing if at all feasible; it is part of the solution.*
- More to follow after the 5:00 PM conference call with Governor Little.

8:00 AM, March 19, 2020 – 11 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Idaho.

- Counties with confirmed cases in Idaho include: Ada (3), Blaine (5), Madison (1), Teton (1) and Twin Falls (1).
- Donation collection times for today are 7:30 to 8:15 AM. And, 12:30 to 1:15 PM. Donations should include bread, cheese, milk, eggs, toilet paper, and laundry soap.
- To those who donated yesterday you made a really difference to three households. Tears of thankfulness at each home were evidence that the best part of each of us is still alive and well.
- New Golf course protocols will be available by the weekend. Changes could include limiting Clubhouse occupancy, sterilization methods for the golf carts and best methods of payment most likely a credit or debit card that can get disinfected prior to processing. Social Distancing and proper Respiratory Hygiene cannot be mandated or enforced but I highly encourage that it be practiced at all times. More to follow in this space tomorrow.
- **Get out and enjoy the first day of Spring if at all possible!**

4:30 PM, March 18, 2020 – nine confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Idaho.

Notes from the Governor's Conference Call with Cities:

- Your best resource for information about COVID-19 is our Southeastern Idaho Public Health District. Hotline number: 208-234-5875
- State Goal #1: - Protect the most vulnerable, the elderly and infirmed.
- State Goal #2: - Flatten the Curve – so we can manage our regional health care capacity.

Washington Post COVID19 Simulation (This link is one that I used in my Biology class)
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/world/corona-simulator/>

- Limit public gatherings to 10 or less and practice Social Distancing.
- There is no statewide mandate to close restaurants or bars; this is currently a decision left at the local level. Owners are encouraged to allow for proper Social Distancing and ventilation.
- There are no plans to reduce SNAP or WICK benefits and the State is trying to increase that flexibility.
- The Department of Labor understands that many will be temporarily unemployed and are working to accommodate an increase in unemployment benefit requests.
- Cities are encouraged to be temporarily more flexible in Daycare licensure to help accommodate school closures. The City of American Falls will have those guidelines available online by 5:00 PM, Monday, March 23rd.

- There are currently no restrictions on travel if you are not symptomatic and maintain Social Distancing. Please see the recommendations from the Southeastern Idaho Public Health District below.
- Governmental public meetings will most likely be held via video or conference calling for the foreseeable future. As the City of American Falls implements those technologies more information will be shared with you so that you can participate if you wish to. Tonight's American Falls Recessed City Council meeting will be held in person; seating is limited in order to maintain proper Social Distancing.

Recommendations from the Southeastern Idaho Public Health District:

Southeastern Idaho Public Health is urging community members to do the following to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

- When sick, work or engage in schooling from home whenever possible.
- If you are sick, limit contact with others as much as possible
- Avoid people who are sick
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Limit social gatherings in groups to no more than 10 people
- Avoid discretionary travel, shopping trips, and social visits.
- Do not visit nursing homes, retirement communities or long-term care facilities unless to provide critical assistance.

The above recommendations are shown to dramatically reduce the transmission of COVID-19 and keeps people safe. This is the core critical challenge: to delay the spread of disease to reduce the peak number of people who are infected, in order not to exceed the capacity of the health care system.

By preserving the limited capacity of the Health District's healthcare system, temporarily limiting social and recreational gatherings will help ensure that a health crisis does not become a humanitarian disaster.

Get Your Home Ready – a Center for Disease Control (CDC) Link

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/get-your-household-ready-for-COVID-19.html>

8:30 AM, March 18, 2020 – nine confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Idaho.

- Number of people tested through the Idaho Bureau of Laboratories = 343
- Number of people tested through commercial laboratories = 125
- Total number of people monitored by Idaho public health (past & present) = 78
- Number of people no longer being monitored by public health = 43

- Total number of lab-confirmed COVID-19 cases in Idaho = 9

7:30 AM, March 18, 2020 – nine confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Idaho.

- There have been no confirmed cases in Power County or in the Southeastern Idaho Region for Public Health.
- The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare reports 353 people have been tested statewide.
- Recommended group or meeting size is 5 to 10 providing for appropriate social distancing (6 to 10 feet) in well ventilated areas.
- City Council will discuss COVID-19 implications for employees and citizens at 6:40 PM, in a work session prior to the regular Council meeting beginning at 7:00 PM. The meeting will be on Facebook Live on the American Falls Police Department page.
- The American Falls Police Department will be accepting donations of milk, eggs, cheese, bread, spare rolls of toilet paper, hand soap, dish soap and laundry soap. These items will be made available to the infirmed, elderly and isolated who have no one else to help provide for them. Times to drop off in the parking lot behind City Hall are at Noon, 2:00 PM, and 4:00 PM today, Wednesday, March 18th. Additional donation requests to follow as needed. Watch this space.
- See the information below for other information about Our City and COVID-19.

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New Information:

In an effort to minimize personal contact the doors to City Hall will be closed beginning on Thursday morning, March 19th.

- We are still working and providing the same services as always.
- Payments to the City can be made in the drop box.
- Payments received in cash exceeding the amount of the required payment will have a credit attached to the next month's payment and a receipt mailed to you with that next month's bill.
- Building permits and inspections can be made by appointment.
- Essential meetings with myself or other key personnel can also be made by appointment.
- Water, Waste Water (Sewer), Sanitation (Garbage) and Police services will continue.
- Police procedures have been modified to best protect both our officers and citizens.

- We will be maintaining our City Parks and paths and encourage you to use them; but to use social distancing (6 to 10 feet of separation) as you do so. Fresh air and activity are good for most of us.
- We will be developing similar protocols for the golf course in an effort to encourage those inclined to again get fresh air and exercise.

New Services Provided:

- If you are infirmed or in self-quarantine as directed by a doctor this service is for you.
- City personnel will be available to help you buy personal essentials and groceries.
- Service criteria include: you must be of limited mobility, feeble or weak in body or health, especially because of age or have been directed by a healthcare provider to self-isolate.
- Service phone number: 208-637-9241
- Service hours:

Monday through Friday	8:00 am. to 5:00 pm.
Saturday and Sunday	9:00 am. to Noon
- Protocol: Call the phone number above. The City employee receiving you call will have a series of questions for you to answer; one of those will be your preferred method of payment. A list of your needs will be taken. An American Falls Police Officer will come to your residence for the means of payment. A different City employee will gather all the items that are available in town that are on your list. The items will be given to the Police Officer to delivered back to you.
- This service will be limited to residences living within the City impact area; about three mile out of the City limits.
- This service will be limited to one delivery per week providing all the needed items on the list were able to be delivered. Those items not currently in stock will be delivered when they become available.

The City is providing this service in good faith in an effort to provide for the needs of those most vulnerable among us. This service is not intended to be for residence who actually have family or others who can provide similar assistance.

5:00 PM, March 17, 2020 – eight confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Idaho; none in Power County.

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