

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Wright County Health Department Role in Novel Coronavirus Response

Wright County Public Health and Environmental Health continues to work with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), state and local partners to monitor and respond to novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). The virus was first detected in Wuhan, China in December 2019, and has since been detected in other parts of the world, including the U.S.

While the emergence of a new virus that can infect humans is always a serious public health concern, the risk to the general public remains low at this time. This is a situation that public health prepares for and responds to with a layered approach to protect the public health.

At this time, the greater risk to Wright residents is from influenza. This is also the time of year many respiratory viruses circulate. “It’s important to protect yourself from any of these viruses by covering coughs and sneezes, washing hands frequently, and staying home from work when ill,” said Wright County Environmental Health Director Sandy McGrath RN. “It’s also not too late to get your flu vaccination.”

If you traveled to China within the past 14 days and feel sick with fever, cough or difficulty breathing, you should seek medical care right away. Before going to a healthcare office, you should call ahead and tell them about your symptoms. It’s important to remember the risk of novel coronavirus is associated with travel to China, not to a specific group of people or ethnicity.

IDPH will post statewide numbers of persons being monitored, persons being tested, and test results on the IDPH webpage at <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus> on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Individuals will not be identified by city, county or region, as the recommended actions for the public are no different than for any other respiratory virus, including the flu. If there was a different action recommended for the public that required the release of additional information, IDPH would do so, while balancing confidentiality with the public health needs of the community.

For more information, visit the IDPH Novel Coronavirus webpage and follow the department on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/IowaDepartmentOfPublicHealth> and on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/IAPublicHealth>.

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