

Chair & County Health Officer,

Dr. Charles Stringham

Board Members,

Ken Tipton, County Commission Chair

Marlene Brissenden, County Commissioner

Jim French, County Commissioner

Ron Cerri, County Commissioner

Mike Bell, County Commissioner

Mike Allen, Humboldt County Sheriff

# Humboldt County Health Board

Humboldt County Courthouse  
50 West Fifth Street Room 205  
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445



October 20, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Nicole Maher, PIO  
Humboldt County Health Board  
Phone: (775) 761-2624  
Email: nicole@winnemucca.net

## **HUMBOLDT COUNTY REPORTS 158 TOTAL CONFIRMATIONS, 27 ACTIVE CASES**

WINNEMUCCA, Nev.— Humboldt County has been notified of one more positive case of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), raising the county's total to 158.

Overall, 127 of Humboldt County's cases were identified through Humboldt General Hospital, one was identified through community-based screening, eight were identified through the Golden Valley Medical Center, 10 were identified through testing at the Ridley's Pharmacy, and 12 were confirmed out of area.

The Fort McDermitt Paiute Shoshone Tribe is reporting 107 total cases; 90 were confirmed through the Fort McDermitt Wellness Center, eight were tested out of area, while eight were tested through the National Guard community-based testing on July 26. In all, Fort McDermitt has completed 1,140 tests, 100 people have recovered, one person has died, and the tribe has six active cases.

Based on available information, close contacts of the newest Humboldt County case are being identified or have been notified and are following self-isolation procedures to prevent community spread of the virus.

Brief summary information of Humboldt County's latest case follows:

- Case 158 – A man in his 50s, whose case remains under investigation. He is self-isolating at home.

Of the previous 157 cases, 127 have recovered, 22 are self-isolating, four are hospitalized, and four have died; Humboldt County has 27 active cases.

Humboldt County Health Officer Charles Stringham, MD, said the City of Winnemucca has launched an early detection system for COVID-19 that relies on wastewater from homes and businesses to help identify disease clusters before they spread.

"These wastewater samples can detect concentrations of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and act as a potential early-warning system for outbreaks," he said.

Dr. Stringham said while someone with COVID-19 might not show symptoms for several days, people have been shown to shed virus RNA (ribonucleic acid) seven to 10 days before identifying the virus.

The City of Winnemucca retrieves five wastewater samples each week: one from the headworks at the wastewater treatment plant and four from specific manhole areas within the city.

Beginning in August, results initially came back below the detectable limit of 2.6 RNA copies per mL of wastewater. However, Dr. Stringham said recent results are showing a significant spike in COVID-19 concentrations in various parts of Winnemucca.

“The City of Winnemucca cannot determine exactly how many people in the identified areas may be affected,” he said, “but the data definitely supports an upward trend in COVID-19 infections.”

Dr. Stringham said over the course of the coming weeks, residents may receive a notification—either by mail or as a hand bill on their door—that notifies them of a possible upward trend in their vicinity and encourages them to be tested at the first sign of symptoms.

“We don’t want people to be alarmed if they receive a notice about an increased trend in their neighborhood,” said Dr. Stringham. “Instead we want them to use that information to stay alert and to be prepared.”

Dr. Stringham added, “If you believe you may be experiencing COVID-like symptoms, please be tested as soon as possible.”

The doctor said early testing not only will help local health officials quickly identify cases and mitigate the virus’s spread, but it also will help ensure that those affected by the virus have the appropriate supports to weather the illness.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Humboldt County:

- Stay home to limit exposure, and wear a facial covering if going out in public is necessary.
- Maintain 6 feet of distance from other people at all times.
- 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.
- Avoid visiting sick people or those who are self-isolating.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, and throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Self-isolate if they have had a known exposure, or if they are awaiting COVID-19 test results.
- Stay informed. The COVID-19 situation is changing frequently. Up-to-date information is available on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [website](#).

The Humboldt General Hospital Screening Clinic has moved to the HGH West Campus, located at 51 E. Haskell Street. From 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, the clinic offers drive-thru screening for asymptomatic and symptomatic persons with a doctor’s order only. Those who are experiencing severe COVID-like symptoms should go directly to the HGH Emergency Department.

The Office of the Humboldt County Community Health Nurse also is offering testing to asymptomatic persons with no known exposure. For more information or to make an appointment, residents may call the clinic at (775) 623-6575.

Free cloth masks are available to community members at the Olsen's and Ridley's pharmacies, courtesy of the Mucca Mask Makers, or by messaging the group on Facebook @Mucca Mask Makers.

Local COVID-19 information is available in Spanish @CovidEspanol. Humboldt County COVID-19 updates and information are available in English at @HumboldtCountyNV and @StopHumboldtCoronavirus.

###